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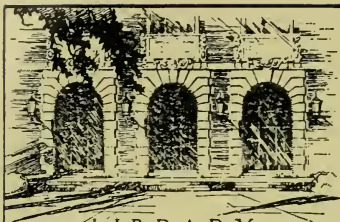




Louisa Dorothea Stanley.

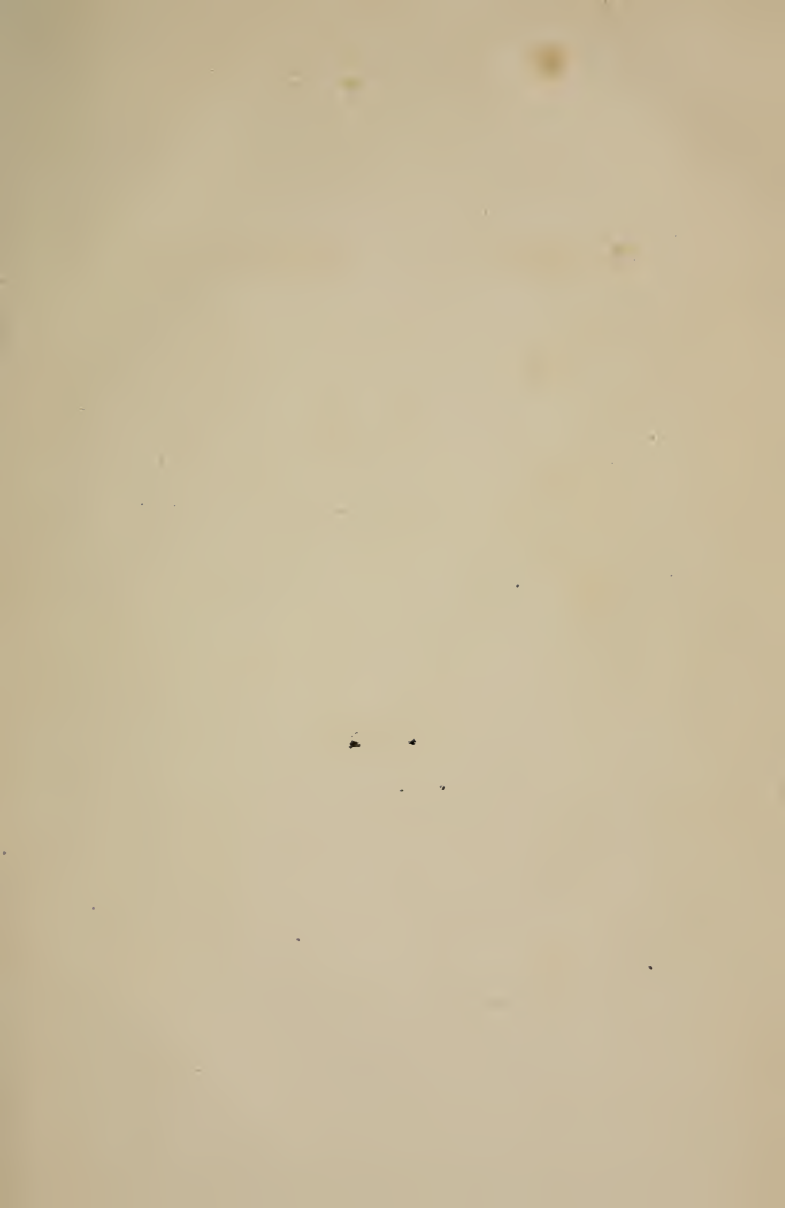



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A R T H U R C O N W A Y;

OR,

SCENES IN THE TROPICS.

BY CAPTAIN MILMAN.

LATE H. M. 33RD REGIMENT.

AUTHOR OF "THE WAY-SIDE CROSS," &c

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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ARTHUR CONWAY.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT thirty yards above one of the sharpest bends of the gorge, a mass from the top of the cliff had become detached, and, falling on the path, had carried part of it completely away, leaving a chasm, full ten feet wide; rolling thence into the river's bed, it had, together with the broken pieces of dried earth formed a complete dam across the stream. The effect, however, was only temporary; for the increased pressure of the water from above soon carried away or dissolved the soil, and the stream

had forced a passage for itself between the fallen rock and the base of the cliff.

How to get the ladies and the horses over was the difficulty. The leap was not very great for a man or a trained hunter ; but their horses were utterly unaccustomed to jumping, and the ladies encumbered with their riding habits. There was no possibility of getting round the obstruction, as the cliff was nearly precipitous, and the descent to the river's bed a sheer fall of from fifteen to twenty feet.

"If I can leap my horse across," thought Arthur, "the rest may follow like a flock of sheep ; and then we may devise some plan for getting the women over."

Without saying a word, he seated himself firmly in his saddle, and rushed his horse suddenly at the chasm.

Whether the horse was taken by surprise, or whether he knew that the safety of the party depended upon his exertions, it is impossible to say ; but he neither swerved nor hesitated—

rose gallantly at the leap, and cleared it in his stride ; pulling up immediately of his own accord.

Marguerite, who was close behind Arthur when he set his horse in motion, did not faint or scream ; but sat still as a statue, deadly pale, and with her eyes half-closed. The moment he had cleared the chasm safely, either unconscious of what she was doing, ignorant of the danger she run, or moved by one of those impulses so difficult to account for, before any one could say a word, she started off to follow him.

Rosalie uttered a fearful scream ; but it was too late.

The horse made a gallant effort to clear the chasm, but jumped short ; and fell partially forward on his knees and side.

Arthur heard Rosalie's scream, and turned round in his saddle just as Marguerite's horse was rising at the leap. He saw her danger in a moment, and threw himself off ; and, as she fell on her horse's neck, he caught her by the

arms, and dragged, rather than lifted her, from the saddle. Fortunately, for a single moment the horse did not stir nor struggle; and she had time to disengage herself from the stirrups.

Scarcely had he drawn her light form away, when the horse endeavoured to recover himself; but his hind legs finding no support, and the soil breaking away from under him, owing to his fierce struggles, he fell gradually backwards and rolled down into the dark gully just below the rock that had dammed the water up. Arthur's horse, too, had disappeared. For a second time that day, Arthur held Marguerite in his arms. Events succeeding one another rapidly, seemed to be hurrying to a fulfilment the desire of Marguerite's heart. Months of conventional intercourse would not have produced the same effect on the wayward and blighted feelings of our hero. He inquired tenderly, in an anxious whisper, whether she was injured. Marguerite repaid him with a

sweet smile, and answered in the negative. Strange to say, with the exception of her habit, the skirts of which were torn in shreds, neither her limbs nor person had sustained any injury. Nor was she in the least frightened. The opportunity was not, however, one in which they could explain or give vent to their feelings and sensations, for they found themselves in a worse dilemma than before. The chasm was widened. The party was divided, for nothing would have induced the more timid creole to attempt the leap after Marguerite's fall. Two of the horses were gone, and two still to be got over. What was to be done?

Arthur proposed that he should set off, on foot, and get a party of soldiers to build a temporary bridge across the chasm and bring horses out for the ladies to ride in on.

After some debate, this was agreed upon, as it seemed the only way to rescue them from their unpleasant situation.

François had no fear of the soldiers, as he

had not been one of those who tried to tamper with their allegiance, and he had, for the moment, forgotten the note he had sent up to the Morne by the old negro ; but no sooner had Arthur turned his back, than he remembered it and its contents, and how he had signed it too. It was by no means a pleasant reminiscence under the circumstances, but what could he do ? To leave his dearly-loved Rosalie and Marguerite also in such a situation, to take care of himself was impossible. He must trust to his good luck—to chance. They might not give the letter to the young officer, or old Auguste might not have yet gone up to the Morne, he might be in too great a hurry to read it then even if he got it ; but if he should, what course would the young Englishman take ? would he arrest him as a spy ? No. He would think, what was indeed partially true, that he had come over to see his cousin Rosalie, not to plot against the English. Fortunately, however, for both of them, Arthur Conway had no chance of

getting the note at present. Scarcely had our hero turned the sharp angle of the gorge when, to his great surprise, he perceived a man advancing towards him, leading his horse, with another following it close behind; and greater still was his astonishment when, on his near approach, he recognised the man who had paid him the nocturnal visit at his quarters.

His dress was certainly different, for the Carib now wore a coronet of feathers, but smaller and duller-coloured than the one which he had displayed at the assembly of conspirators. A tunic of striped cotton had taken the place of the feathered one; but a belt, covered with brilliant plumage, was round his waist, in which was stuck a light-handled axe. A short bow and a quiver, cased in shark skin, were slung at his back, the belt adorned with pieces of coral and red seeds passing across his breast and over his left shoulder. When he came up to the young officer, he said, looking suspiciously round :

“ English Captain must not know the Captain Baron—it is good.”

“ Why not ? ” inquired Arthur, inconsiderately.

The savage looked at him with a near approach to contempt on his face, but spoke as if he had not felt any.

“ The rocks have ears, whispers fly far in the open air. The Carib is silent.”

There is something in this man I do not quite understand, thought Arthur, but he is nevertheless welcome indeed ; then aloud : “ The path has broken down, and the maidens and the horses cannot cross it without a bridge ; will the Captain Baron assist us to get them across ? ”

The Carib nodded assent, and fastening the horses to some bushes, they left them. Before they came in sight of the party, the Carib told Arthur that he had been waiting at the ford below, when he saw a horse struggling in the gully ; that he had gone to its assistance and had succeeded in extricating it, the reins having

got entangled round its legs, and that the other horse had followed it on the path above, neighing, until it came to the ford, when it stopped and suffered itself to be caught. The horse that had fallen into the stream had received no material injury beyond a few scratches and bruises. Some accident he knew must have occurred, so he had come to give his assistance. As they came in view, the Carib once again whispered: "The Carib is a stranger to his brother—it is good."

Marguerite uttered a joyful cry when she saw Arthur approaching. She knew that he would not have returned without some good reason.

The Carib took no notice of her, but beckoning to Arthur to follow him he jumped lightly across the chasm, passing Rosalie and her cousin without speaking a word, but giving François a sign with his hand.

The young Frenchman astonished as he was at seeing the Captain Baron so unexpectedly, perceived at once that he did not wish to be

known. And he was thankful for it, inasmuch as had the Chief betrayed to the young English officer any previous knowledge of his person, it would or might give rise to unpleasant surmises in his mind as to his business in the island; for he firmly believed that all the Caribs, headed by this very man, would join the republican army on their landing, and would carry on a war to the knife against the English; this impression was still more deeply stamped on his mind by the fact that the news of the Caribs' rising at St. Vincent, where their numbers were still more formidable, was generally known at Dominica; still he was terribly puzzled. What had induced the Carib to follow them to the head of the valley? He could not have encountered them accidentally, for this was not the Carib country. True, it was the Carib and not an Obeah man who had warned him in the morning of the approaching convulsion of nature—a fact that he had naturally enough concealed from Arthur Conway; but would this

account for his presence? No, he could not for a moment suppose that the Carib had come all that distance to extricate them from a perilous position which he could know nothing about. It was in vain that Le Blanc puzzled his brain with ideas and surmises why he was there—and he was sufficiently acquainted with the character of the natives to be quite sure that it was of no use asking the Chief any questions. So, as many a wiser man has done before him, he simply resolved to make the best of it, and obeyed the sign the Carib had made him. Whispering to Rosalie that no doubt this man had some means of rescuing them from their awkward position, and parrying or not replying to her questions concerning the Carib, he started off after him.

Arthur who had lingered behind for a minute to re-assure Marguerite, joined him, and they went back together towards the waterfall.

There they found the Carib with his light axe busily hewing down the tall tapering bam-

boos; drawing them out as they fell one by one, and chopping off about six feet from the point of the slender stem; stripping the rest of the branches from the trunks which were about twenty feet in length, he left them bare. The thickest of these he split into four or five pieces. Then laying the bare poles in a row with the assistance of the young men who quickly caught his method, he interlaced and wattled the slender leafy tops, and the lengths he had split between the trunks, if we may so call them, of the bamboos, forming a kind of ingenious basket-work light but very strong. When this was done to his satisfaction, he went back to the chasm, and taking the bridles off the two horses he tied the reins together, and by jumping over with one end in his hand, leaving the other under a heavy stone, he found that they were long enough to reach across. By this simple method the temporary bridge, which in the meantime had been carried and dragged to the spot by the two young men, was hauled across the dreaded

leap. Then placing two or three of the heaviest splinters of rock he could lift on to the end of the bamboos, and removing the bridles, he ran lightly over the bridge. It bent a little beneath his weight, but bore him bravely over. Then Arthur passed over it eager to rejoin the still agitated Marguerite. Seeing the frail bridge bearing others so securely Rosalie no longer hesitated, and crossed it in her turn, the two young men steadying it at either end; then running up to Marguerite she threw herself into her arms. But in vain did Le Blanc and the Carib use all their endeavours to get the horses over, they seemed perfectly aware of the insecurity of the bridge; they snorted, reared and backed with staring eyes and gaping nostrils, while the foam fell in flakes from their mouths and a clammy sweat broke out over their bodies. They blindfolded them, it was of no avail. No sooner had their fore-feet touched the bamboos than they threw themselves on

their haunches, and obstinately refused to move another step.

There was no alternative, the sun was getting high and his fierce rays shone broadly on the valley.

Rosalie's saddle was transferred to Arthur's horse. The trappings of the two were taken off and concealed amidst the brushwood, and they were left to go free. The two horses trotted off immediately, and in a few minutes were feeding quietly on the fresh tops of the bamboos near the lonely pool. There was no possibility of their straying, little chance of their being stolen. They had shade, food and water, and in the cool of the evening the young officer would be able to send a strong party of men to repair the path and reclaim them. And what was a walk of some seven or eight miles to two active young men?

As soon as Rosalie and Marguerite were in their saddles, Arthur and the young Frenchman simultaneously turned round to thank the Carib

—but he was gone. Slowly and with far different feelings to those which had stirred their hearts in the grey morning, the party wended its way back to the ford at Roseau.

Rosalie could not forgive herself for having insisted on the ride—the death of the young slave haunted her. Marguerite was terribly agitated by the events of the day, and the sensations awakened in her bosom by Arthur's form and Arthur's words. His spirit too was troubled, for the re-action was great after such stirring scenes, and his conscience asked him had he done right? He had gone too far to retract, but did he love this fair girl as she ought to be loved? Of the whole four the young Frenchman's mind was the most tranquil, simply because in his nature there was more *sang froid*, although he knew full well that within a few hours he must part with Rosalie, perhaps for ever. For ever! It is a fearful sound! It has an awful meaning! Even in this transient world to part for ever! To see

no more—to hear no more the thing we love !
Ay, beyond this, to hope no more that we shall
interchange communion with what we love !
This is to part for ever ! Yet in his mind, that
for ever could not enter. Death alone, that
awful certainty killing hope, might plant it there.
His nature could not comprehend despair,
and yet his hope went not beyond the grave.

The events of the day had been of such a
nature that the two young men felt now as if they
had long known each other ; and, as Arthur
had not the slightest idea that the lively French-
man was a dangerous enemy, he pressed him to
make use of his services as long as he should
remain on the island. François, in return,
would have opened his heart to our hero, and
appealed to his chivalry, had he not been sen-
sible that by so doing he would compromise
Arthur. We are not, however, quite sure that
he would have been quite so scrupulous about
it, had he not felt tolerably certain that old
Auguste Pierrot would deliver the note safely.

The party found no other serious obstacle to their progress. There were a few fissures and rents in the earth certainly, and in several places the path had been partially broken away ; here and there, too, fragments of rock were lying scattered about, fresh shining places in the face of the cliffs showing from whence they had been detached.

Some of the out-buildings of the mill had been destroyed, and one or two of the negro huts had fallen in like a house of cards, built by children.

As they approached Roseau, the marks were less evident, showing that the shock had been a local one. The vein of it had probably passed along the centre and uninhabited part of the island, leaving the sea line comparatively uninjured. All the negroes, however, that they encountered, seemed in a terrific fright ; and one old man, of whom they inquired whether he had felt it, answered, pale and trembling : “ Ees, Massa ; him shakee, shakee too much. Ole

negro man berry, berry sick; pose him shakee again, he die.” And now the party must separate, for the ford is reached. As Arthur took Marguerite’s little trembling hand in his to bid her good-bye, Rosalie and her cousin turned away. He pressed it tenderly and kissed it; and, still holding it, he whispered softly: “Dearest Marguerite, to-morrow.” Then, with a deep sigh, in which love and sorrow bore equal portions, he moved slowly away, shaking hands with Rosalie and François as he passed. The lively creole gave him an appealing—an inquiring look, which he read rightly, and answered by one word—“To-morrow.”

CHAPTER II.

We will now suppose the three arrived at La Belle Etoile. Old Devrien had become nervous at their non-appearance. He had felt the shock, and knew the dangers they would be exposed to at the waterfall ; so, when they did arrive, the old man fell on Rosalie's neck, and wept aloud ; then he kissed Marguerite and François, and danced round, until he fell exhausted into an easy chair. The slaves too, one and all, crowded round her, kissing her feet and the hem of her garment, crying with joy.

At La Belle Etoile, at least, Rosalie was a

queen—a queen beloved—not feared. François, the republican, saw this, and it made a lasting impression on his mind. He loved Rosalie; therefore he could see nothing degrading—nothing humiliating—in the actions of the slaves: he would have done it himself. Yet she was of the class he wished to annihilate—nay, he had taken an oath to do so. He saw how an aristocrat could be loved—nay, almost worshipped, by beings whom his creed declared were his equals; and he was to lose, for a time at least, even if ever Rosalie should recal her words, this being so bright, so beautiful, so beloved, for *his* *creed*!

Poor Marguerite, happy at heart, but fatigued and agitated, soon retired to her apartment, and Rosalie followed her. Shall we profane the maiden sanctuary with our unhallowed presence? For a moment we must.

Scarcely had Marguerite removed her torn riding-habit, and, sitting at her toilette table, was arranging her golden hair, thinking that she

looked very pale and dejected, when she perceived a note lying there. She took it up, marvelling what it could be. The direction was to her, and in a man's handwriting. It was not her uncle's. Whose could it be? Not Arthur's, surely! What made her think it could be his? foolish girl; had he not just left them? Had Marguerite been more worldly, she might never have read it; but her heart suspected no guile. She broke the seal. The words were fairly written, in a clerk-like hand. As she read on, she appeared to be fascinated, and her eyes were riveted on the paper. Let us look over her shoulder, and read them too:

“ You are young, Margaret Gordon, you are artless, and know nothing of the world—beware of the snares of the ungodly man. Behold this picture, and let your mind study it. Be warned. Two persons in this island can vouch for its truth. A noble mansion stands amidst stately oak-trees in the warm west. The mottled deer are resting under their shade. The park slopes

away to a silver trout-stream ; blue hills rise in the distance. There is a maiden standing at an open window. The sun-rays fall on her waving tresses. Her eyes are beaming with love and pleasure. See, she has a letter in her hand, which she raises to her lips and kisses—let us read the post-mark—it is Dominica ! She opens it—what ineffable joy suffuses her cheeks and sparkles in her eyes as she peruses each glowing sentence—news from her beloved. Yet is this maiden betrayed ? Look again. A shadowy valley ; a lofty mountain ; a silver stream springing from its side. A deep, silent pool shaded by feathery bamboos ; a vast, solitary mangrove-tree. The earth shakes, the mountains bow their heads, the rocks thunder down. A fair-haired maiden rests in the arms of a young and handsome cavalier. She is listening to his honeyed words. She is happy, for she believes them. Yet this maiden also is betrayed. Can one man love two maidens ? Ask him of the noble oaks, the leaping trout-

stream, the distant hills ; he will answer. But of the maiden he has betrayed he will not speak to the maiden he is betraying. But whisper softly in his ear, for he alone must hear it, the magic name of the absent one, and behold the result. Whisper it gently as the summer breeze sighing amidst the aspens. It is a sweet name, and the maiden is worthy of it, for she is passing fair. It is Edith, Edith, Edith ; remember, Edith !”

There was no signature and no date.

As Marguerite read this extraordinary letter, her cheeks grew paler and paler, her breathing became fainter and fainter, her eyes closed gradually, and she sank back in her chair, senseless and inanimate, with the letter still clutched in her little hand.

Her reason had whispered the truth. He loved some fair young girl in England.

In a short time, Rosalie entered, and, to her surprise and dismay, she found that Marguerite

had fainted away. She strove to restore her to consciousness but in vain. A terrible feeling stole, with an icy coldness, over her heart, that Marguerite was dead. Ah! no,—her heart beats, and she breathes gently, though her eyes are still closed. Rosalie rang for assistance, and a young female slave soon appeared. She started back in terror, screaming: “*Oh, mon Dieu ! elle est morte !*”

“Hush, Fanfan!” said Rosalie, gently, “she is not dead, but sleeps. Come and help me to undress her.”

The young slave, a handsome, dark quadroon, approached timidly and tremblingly, and assisted Rosalie to undress the pale, unconscious maiden; lifting her gently, they placed her in her snowy bed, and as they were undressing her, the letter, unperceived by them, fell on the floor.

Rosalie watched for some time by the bedside, hoping that Marguerite would recover her

senses, but her eyes remained shut, and a low moaning, murmuring sound issued from her half-closed lips.

The creole became alarmed as she perceived that this was no common fainting fit; and leaving Fanfan to watch, she hastened to her own room and wrote a note summoning the only physician then practising at Roseau, and despatched it by a slave on horseback, bidding him ride for life and death—no unpleasant order to a negro, and one likely to be obeyed. She would have written to Arthur, requesting the attendance of the surgeon of the troops, but she felt that it would be alarming him terribly, perhaps unnecessarily. Then, without informing her father or her cousin François of the calamity that had befallen her sweet friend, her adopted sister, she returned to Marguerite's chamber. It might be in the end but a passing faintness, and she would not render her cousin's departure more sad with any unpleasant tidings.

With all her coquetry, Rosalie had a kind and feeling heart.

There was some relief to know that Marguerite breathed, for while there is life there is hope. Yet she began to grow restless, and to mutter incoherent words, and a flush passed over her cheeks.

“My poor little Maggie has caught the fever ; and no wonder, after what she had gone through to-day,” murmured Rosalie, as she went to the arm-chair to draw it near the bed. “But what is this, I wonder?—a letter ! and directed to Miss Margaret Gordon ! Has this anything to do with her sudden illness ? What can it be ? Is her kind uncle dead, or ill ? Whose writing is it ? Let me see—no signature ! an anonymous letter to Marguerite ! There can be no harm, then, in my reading it—nay, I must, for her sake. There is some mystery, which this may reveal !”

She did read it—over and over again. Her

mind did not grasp its contents so readily as poor Marguerite's had, for her heart was already fixed ; but the force and apparent reality of the picture drawn in the letter, gradually revealed its meaning to her. If true, alas for Marguerite ! Now her sudden illness was accounted for. Some one must have been watching them at the waterfall—the native ! No, it could not be. Some one else must have been there. Rosalie's character, unlike that of creoles in general, was energetic. She was mistress of La Belle Etoile, not only in name, but in fact. Her rule was gentle, but she reigned supreme. Now, all her energies—all her vigilance—all her self-possession—all her art must be called into play in behalf of her friend, whom she indeed loved as a sister. All this time she had stood holding the fatal letter in her hand, confused and horrified, but as the first shock passed away, like the earthquake's crash, she sat down by the bedside and began to arrange her thoughts. Then, perhaps, for the first time, she felt how happy a

thing it is to be accustomed to think and act for oneself. The first thing to be ascertained was how and when the letter had been delivered at La Belle Etoile. Rosalie beckoned to the quadroon to come near her, and speaking in a whisper, she said :

“Do you know, Fanfan, who brought this letter to Miss Gordon?”

“Yes, Ma’mselle; I put it on her table myself.”

“But who gave it you, Fanfan?”

“A town-nigger, Ma’mselle.”

“How do you know where he came from?”

“I was standing in the sun, Ma’mselle, warming myself, for I was very cold from the fright the shakee shakee gave me, when a nigger rode up on a mule. He stopped, and said : ‘How you do, Missee? You very pretty gal!’ —impudent fellow!”

“Never mind, Fanfan, what he said about you.”

“*Eh bien !* Ma’mselle. I asked de nigger if

de shakee shakee had been very bad at Roseau, and he said : ' Yes.' So you see, Ma'mselle, he did come from town. Den he asked me if I belonged to La Belle Etoile, and said he had a letter for Ma'mselle Gordon. So I say : ' Give it to me.' "

" And he gave it to you ?" said Rosalie, interrupting her, aware of the slave's natural prolixity of speech.

" Yes, Ma'mselle. Den I asked him who gave it ? De nigger laugh, and said : ' Dat secret ; but I get two dallar for bring it.' "

" Should you know him again, Fanfan ?"

" I tink not, Ma'mselle. All dose niggers so ugly—so much alike ; but I tink I should know de mule again. White, what you call *étoile*, all down his face."

Rosalie remembered she had met a negro, riding a mule with a white blaze, in the tamarind grove, near the ford, so she asked :

" How long ago was this, Fanfan ?"

" 'Bout half an hour, Ma'mselle."

“That will do, Fanfan; but, mind, you must say nothing about this note to any one. Mind this, Fanfan, and I will give you a new bright scarlet bandana.”

The quadroon slave thanked her mistress, and withdrew to a corner of the room, where she squatted down in silence.

So far, Rosalie had learned scarcely anything; but it immediately occurred to her that the man who had helped them across the chasm must have been the person who had been watching them at the waterfall. They had been delayed a long time there—more than two hours; there was, then, plenty of time for a man to have ridden, or even walked, into Roseau, then to have written the letter, which had probably been previously in part prepared, and before they arrived at La Belle Etoile the messenger might have been there, and back again to Roseau.

To find out the native, or whatever he might be, must be her first object.

At that moment there was a slight knock at the door, and Rosalie, with a light step, quitted the bedside, and opened it. Old Pompey was there, with a message from François, saying :

“That if Mademoiselle Devrien was dressed, he would be much obliged for a few minutes’ conversation with her before his departure.”

Rosalie went back to the bed. Marguerite had not stirred. She was loath to leave her friend, even for a short time ; but she could not let François go without bidding him farewell. She felt that she might never see him again. She wished, moreover, to ask him some questions, hoping to gain some information concerning the man who had helped them to cross the chasm, although she had not made up her mind to show him the letter. Bidding the quadroon take her place by the bed, and desiring her to come to her immediately, should Marguerite move, she went to her own boudoir, taking the letter with her, and told old Pompey to let

her cousin know that she was ready to see him.

It was a charming little apartment. The floor and panels of the wall were of highly-polished satin-wood ; the window-curtains, tastefully festooned, were of pale, rose-coloured satin, deeply fringed with lace, and the cushions of the sofa and the chairs were of the same hue and material. A small ebony table, quaintly inlaid with ivory, was strewn with books and elegant *bijouterie*, and in one corner there stood a small *Prie Dieu*, with a richly-carved figure of the crucified Saviour. The *bénitier* was a cup of the purest agate, and a splendidly illuminated missal lay open beneath the crucifix. The room was closely jalousied, the curtains were drawn, diffusing a roseate colour over everything, and a vase filled with lime-blossoms scattered around a delicious fragrance. Had it not been for the presence of the emblems of her religion, the whole would have presented an

appearance of luxury too voluptuous. Yet it was truly emblematical of the mind of its lovely owner, who, now reclining on the sofa in her Spanish dress, awaited the appearance of her lover. He was about to leave her, and her heart was softened towards him.

“Come, dear François,” she said tenderly to him as he entered, “come and sit by me—we are going to part soon. I forgive you all your imprudence; but why, oh why, will you leave us?”

The young Frenchman sat down on the sofa by her side, and, twining his arm gently round her waist, he looked softly into her eyes and murmured: “Thanks, dearest Rosalie, thanks for this. Your father is asleep in his hammock, I have taken leave of him, although I did not tell him where I was going.”

“Your resolution is still unshaken then, and you despise my love.”

“Say not so, dearest. Alas! I now confess that I am truly miserable, Rosalie; but I am

pledged, deeply pledged—honour, good faith, nay more, my oath are in pawn. O, Rosalie ! you would not ask me to break them all ?”

“ Promise me at least, dear François, that you will quit the service of the Republic when you have redeemed your present pledge. Go now ; but go with them no more after this. I tell you they are unholy, accursed, and cannot last.”

“ Be it so, Rosalie ; but it is for you and for you only that I make the sacrifice. If I promise to break with them, will you now plight me your troth ?”

“ Nay, this is ungenerous—”

“ Not so, sweetest. Must I break asunder all my bright visions of liberty, of glory to enter again into the chrysalis state ? Must the finger of scorn be pointed at me ? Behold, say they, the votary of liberty, whose voice was loud, whose ambition was soaring, with his wings clipped like a tame eagle chained by the leg. Ay, worse, they will hiss in my ear ‘ Rene-

gade ! traitor ! aristocrat !' And think you this is a trifle to a heart beating wildly as mine does ? And will not she for whom alone I shall have made this sacrifice reward me ? What remains then but death ? This day has conquered me, Rosalie : will you not pity your victim ?" There was a lofty passion in his words, as if they rushed from the depth of his heart, gradually subsiding into sadness as he concluded. They were too much for the already half-vanquished Rosalie.

"Nay then, dearest, if it will pleasure you," she said, softly, "I promise by all that I hold sacred that I will be yours whensoever you shall come to claim me."

François heard no more, for he drew her towards him and stopped her mouth with a long, sweet lingering kiss.

"And now, dear François, you must listen to me," said Rosalie gravely, when the world again opened to them : "now that I am your betrothed, I must place my confidence in your

hands. Let us be serious. A fearful event has happened since I saw you. I fear my sweet friend, Marguerite, is dying."

"*Mon Dieu*, how terrible! How has this happened? She was quite well after her ride. Are you quite sure she is so ill?"

"I have already sent into Roseau for a doctor, and, until he comes, I cannot tell the extent of our misfortune. I had not intended to tell you of this; but now I am glad I have, for you must help me to unriddle the mystery."

"There is a mystery, then?"

"Yes, dear François: read this letter carefully, and then tell me what you think of it."

François took the letter, and, as Rosalie had done, he read it over and over again, for not having seen the direction, he, for the moment, fancied that it was meant for Rosalie, and, consequently, was dreadfully puzzled. At last, he said, with a strange perplexity on his countenance, which caused a smile to wreath itself round his mistress's lips:

"I cannot make it out at all; there is no sense in it. What do I know of old oaks and a stately mansion, with a lovely girl peeping out of a window?"

"How stupid you are, dear François; do you not understand it is to Marguerite, not to me, that the letter is written?"

"*Sacristie!* I understand it well enough now. It alters the case very much. Poor, poor girl! her illness is now accounted for."

"Now tell me what *you* think of it?"

"Stop! I must read it once more. Ah, I see; this young officer has one love in England and another in Dominica—not a rare or extraordinary occurrence that!"

"But you have not told me your opinion of this letter. How tiresome you are."

"Well, Rosalie, this Captain Conway is either an unprincipled villain, or a most unfortunate man. Aha! now, it strikes me, I have heard something of this before. Not only one, there are two, it seems, already, and this makes

three—peste ! He is a regular lady devourer—take care of yourself, Rosalie.”

“Do be serious, dear François: this is no jesting matter.”

“Now, Rosalie, just look what good you have done by consenting to be my betrothed; perhaps, if our little scene had not taken place, you would not have shown me this letter. Come, give me a sweet kiss, Rosalie, for I will show you how well I shall deserve it. When I have told you all, you will give me not one, but twenty.”

“I will not refuse them, dear François, if you can throw any light on this mystery,” and Rosalie yielded herself to his embrace.

“Rosalie, I love that young Englishman, although he is my enemy. I would not see him wronged, although I would meet him face to face in the open field. I know, or can guess, who wrote this letter: he must have followed us to the waterfall, and spied upon us. Treacherous villain! Ay, he wished me to pander to this

young Englishman's degradation, through you —through you, my Rosalie; failing in that, he has tried this new infernal scheme. This is my advice, dearest: as soon as I am gone, write directly to Captain Conway, urgently, but coldly, requesting his presence here. He will come. Show him this letter yourself, Rosalie, and ask him to tell you his history. If he is a man of honour and a gentleman—both of which I believe him to be—he will consent. Depend upon it, there is something sad and mysterious about it. Let there be no subterfuges—no delicacy—no delay; ask him boldly, and ask him at once. That over, tell him from me—mind, Rosalie, from me, for he may repay me fourfold—that he has a hidden, bitter, implacable enemy present in Dominica, who corresponds with some one in England. He goes by the name of Marinier, and he is a Jesuit. More I know not: but—forewarned, forearmed. Tell him, moreover, that the man who helped

us at the waterfall was the Chief of the Caribs. He knows something of this Marinier."

Rosalie's ears greedily drank in her lover's words, and her heart was inexpressibly lightened. There was a deep pause, as if something had struck them both.

"How mysterious are the ways of Providence," said Rosalie, solemnly. "Behold, a few minutes ago I had no hope for poor Marguerite; and now, because my proud heart has relented towards thee, dearest—and thou hast in part bowed down thy wild, untamed spirit—He has been pleased that hope should again dawn upon us. François, dearest François, wilt thou still call this chance? fatality? Wilt thou not pray to thy God? Wilt thou not, ere we part, bow thy knee to thy crucified Redeemer? Behold him there! O, François! grant me but this, and I shall indeed be happy."

"I—I do not know how to pray," murmured

François, subdued, conquered, in spite of himself.

“Come then, and I will teach thee ;” and, taking her lover’s hand, Rosalie led him, unresisting, to the crucifix, and, kneeling together side by side on the *Prie Dieu*, they poured forth their hearts in humble prayer and adoration to the crucified Redeemer.

Such is the power of love !

“It is not safe for me to stay any longer, dearest,” said François, sadly ; “and I am keeping you from Marguerite. Go, my own Rosalie, and cherish her. Be unto her what you have this day been unto me—a ministering angel. Trust me, I shall never forget our parting. One kiss, and so farewell.”

“Go, François, you are right to go ; though I would keep you in these arms for ever. But, oh ! dearest, do not forget that there is a God. Let not liberty and reason efface religion. Remember when you knelt to your Redeemer with your Rosalie. She will ever pray for you ;

and, when we meet again, she is thine—for ever.”

One fond embrace, and so they parted.

François left La Belle Etoile secretly. He had resumed the dress he wore when he was introduced to the reader, and had replaced the whiskers, beard, and moustache. Following the track by which he and Jack Diver, whom he had quite forgotten, had come to La Belle Etoile, he arrived, without adventure, at La Maison vide.

It was completely deserted. Multitudes of bright-eyed lizards were basking on the walls, or scuttling about the verandahs. A large *tête du chien* glided from beneath the door-steps. A bloated *crapaud* hopped slowly across the path, and an *agouti* rustled through the bushes; while myriads of white ants, working under their covered way, were busily scooping out the inside of the furniture, and thousands of Jack Spaniards came droning out of their pensile nests, amongst the beams.

It had never occurred to Le Blanc that the Carib might play him false. He was not there, however; and the sun was tinting the mountains with rays of gold.

Le Blanc was getting rather nervous, when, by the track that led amidst the tangled brush-wood towards the sea, he perceived an arrow balanced on a forked stick, with the head pointed towards the ocean. He examined it carefully, and found that it was tipped with copper, and feathered with the quill of a seamew's wing. The Carib had been there.

He knocked, however, once more at the door, but the only answer was the sound reverberating through the lonely passages. A land-crab clattered away, and the nasty cockroaches ran scampering off.

He was gone, then, and this was the method he had adopted of pointing out the direction. Le Blanc was to follow. Le Blanc, taking the arrow with him, proceeded along the track indicated.

At the creek by the mangrove shaded stream, where he had landed from the Sally, he could at first see nothing; but presently three forms started up suddenly from amongst the tangled weeds and advanced towards him. They had bows and a quiver of arrows on their backs, but their hands were empty.

“Ha, I thought Le Baron would not fail me,” said François; “but why are his brethren here?”

“The Chief cannot go with his brother in the piragua. La Perouse and Il Duque will paddle him safely over the waves to the Northern Island. Does the French Chief wish anything of the Carib?”

“Does not Le Baron love the English officer who leaped his horse over the chasm, where the waters fall into the deep pool?”

“The French Chief speaks the truth—why should Le Baron lie?”

“Wherefore, then, was Le Baron watching with Marinier behind a rock?”

The Carib replied, indignantly: "Le Baron was not with Marinier. He was alone, for he feared treachery. He loves the English Captain. The Carib's ears are keen. His arrows fly far and true. He went up the valley of the rain-bows because Marinier went before him."

"Le Baron is a great Chief—his ears hear far—his eyes can see the eagle on the lofty mountain-top. If he would do the French Chief a service he will watch Marinier and the mulatto, Lemantin, and he will tell the English Captain what he hears and sees."

"It is well," replied the Carib. "Le Baron loves both his brothers."

Then motioning to the two Caribs they lifted the piragua from among the castor-oil plants, and launched it in the stream, placing in it a porous jar of water, some sweet limes and shaddocks, a loaf of bread and a large broiled fish, covering the whole with damped fern leaves.

François taking a kindly leave of Le Baron crept in, and they paddled silently down the stream.

The Carib waved his hand, and turned away towards the mountains.

CHAPTER III.

THE physician of Roseau was unfortunately absent in the country when the negro slave arrived with Rosalie's note. But understanding that it was a pressing case, his wife opened it, and adding a few lines of her own, she sent the slave up to the Morne to inquire for the surgeon of Arthur's detachment.

The surgeon happened to be in Arthur's quarters when an orderly brought him the note, and he opened and read it there. When he had finished it, he said to our hero: "This is extra-professional, Conway; but I suppose there

can be no harm in my going a little distance into the country to see a fair patient who has been suddenly taken dangerously ill."

"None in the least, my good fellow," replied Arthur, carelessly. "Thank God, your services are not much required here at present. I am rather busy, and somewhat tired with my ride, or I would go with you."

"By the bye, Conway, have you any idea where La Belle Etoile is? what a Frenchified name."

"What!" almost screamed Arthur, "what did you say?"

"Read it, my good fellow, and satisfy yourself."

Arthur almost snatched the note from the surgeon's hand, while a horrible idea of some impending evil made the perspiration stand on his brow and the characters of the writing dance before his eyes. "Take it back," he said, hoarsely, "and read it to me, I cannot; my eyes swim, and my brain reels."

The surgeon, not understanding his emotion,

and attributing it probably to the effect of the sun on Arthur, read it aloud ; it was couched thus :

“ My dear Sir,

“ I am sorry to inform you, that Miss Gordon has been taken suddenly ill, and, I fear, dangerously so ; if you can make it convenient, I should feel much obliged by your coming out to La Belle Etoile without delay,

“ Ever yours,

“ ROSALIE DEVRIEN.”

“ To Dr. Gray,

“ Physician, Roseau.

“ As my husband will not be at home before night, I have sent the messenger on with this, as it appears serious.—S. G.”

“ Oh, God ! another blow—one more such, and it is finished,” murmured Arthur. “ Surely this world to me is but a vast desert ; every

green thing I see fades from me like a mirage ;
the water I would drink turns to sand."

"Why, what's the matter, Conway, you must have caught the fever."

"Dallas, I ride with you."

"Certainly not—I will not allow it—go to bed, you are heated and fatigued with your ride. It would be insanity for you to go out again in your present state."

"Dallas, I am not mad—did you know all, you would pity me. Go with you I must and will—it would kill me to stay."

"More likely to do so if you go out in the sun again," replied the surgeon, with a shrug. "At all events, lie down and take some rest—I cannot go for an hour or more."

"For God's sake, go at once, Dallas! She may die! There is more in this than you imagine," said Arthur, vehemently excited.

"If you will promise me to lie down for an hour," repeated the surgeon, taking out his watch, "I will order horses to be saddled."

“ If I lie down and sleep, you will go without me.”

“ No, no. I see you have some secret interest in these people, and I will not deceive you ; I will come and call you. But, mark, I will not be answerable for the consequences. You are in a high fever already, and this is no climate to trifle with. Good bye, for the present,” and the surgeon left the room.

“ Ay, a fever of the mind,” murmured Arthur, throwing himself on a sofa. “ Am I then, for ever fated to be unhappy in my love—am I like the deadly upas, destined to blight everything that comes near me? Why had I not strength of mind to resist the temptations of this fatal day? Ah, my sweet Marguerite! why were you so simple, so artless, so open? why did you not wear a mask, like other women? Why, oh! why did you raise hopes in this blighted heart, that death might dash them down? In thy love, the gloom of my soul might have become light. Is it to end in utter

darkness ? am I mad ? not yet—not yet ! But, should Marguerite die !”

He shuddered at the thought, and groaned aloud. It was terrible to see the workings of his over-heated, over-wrought imagination ! The idea that Marguerite was to die, had suddenly fixed itself in his mind. It was sad to see this young man, in other things so firm of purpose, so high-minded, so courageous, conjuring up an awful phantasy of death—picturing to himself, as a certainty, what might be, but, as yet, was not—despairing when there was still hope—desponding, yet excited almost to madness. Then, as he lay, groaning in spirit, a terrible shadow was cast upon the awful picture. Instead of one, there were two forms, one distinct and visible, the other filmy, shadowy, unsubstantial—Marguerite and Edith—the past and the present. Edith and Marguerite. Fever was in his veins, though he heeded it not. Rising from his couch, he filled a tumbler-full of wine, and drank it off. For the moment, it

steadied his nerves. He took out his watch. Half an hour had not passed away, though it had seemed to him half a day.

Will he never come?

A knock at the door! Is it Dallas?—no, it is an orderly.

“A note for you, Sir,” said the soldier, respectfully touching his cap.

“Is she dead?” said Arthur, in a hollow voice.

“No, Sir, thank you; she is as well as can be expected,” replied the soldier, thinking that his captain was inquiring after his wife, who had lately been in an interesting situation. “Shall I leave the note, Sir?”

“Did you not say she was dead?” repeated Arthur, mechanically holding out his hand for the note.

“God forbid! your honour. Shall I wait, Sir?”

“What for?”

“The letter, Sir. There may be an answer. The messenger is waiting.”

“Go !”

The soldier saluted his captain gravely, went to the right-about, and marched out of the room.

Tom Ellam was standing in the shade of a mangoe-tree, near the bottom of the steps of the creeper-covered porch, waiting to see his young master.

“I say, Tom,” said the orderly, “what’s the matter with the Captain? I think he has been turning his little finger up. I never seed him this way afore.”

“No, Jack ; you’re wrong. Master never drinks.”

“Then, as sure as a gun, he’s got the fever. Why, he seemed quite put out, like, that my old woman hadn’t died in her confinement.”

“Nonsense, Jack. Master is in one of his low fits. He didn’t mean your missus at all. I know better than that. But I suppose I had better not go in now, though I wanted to see him about those Frenchers we trapped so nicely.”

“Wait a moment, Tom ; I seed the surgeon leave the Captain’s quarters, a bit ago. He went over to the hospital to fetch sommat, I suppose. Wait till he comes back again. There’s Yellow Jack abroad.”

“Devil doubt it !” replied Tom. “That sailor captain—Gentleman John, as they call him, on board the ‘Sally’—is nicely in for it. What the deuce could have brought him into the company of such vermin ? I heard he was to have dined with the Captain at the mess to-night ; instead of that, we find him sick of fever, in a dirty hammock, swung in the old tumble-down house where we snared the Frenchers, with a white-headed nigger as hospital orderly. I hear he is to be brought up to our hospital.”

“What will they do with the Frenchers, Tom ?”

“Hang them, to be sure.”

“Won’t they try ’em first ?”

“No. Hang them first, and try them by a

court-martial afterwards—that's the dodge ! It's no time, this, for levity. I say, Jack, what asses they were to think that money would make us desert our colours. Mounseer caught hold of a slippery eel when he picked out Tom Connolly."

"He's a knowing chap, that Fighting Tom. He took their drink, pocketed their rhino, and limed them into the bargain."

And the two soldiers laughed loudly and merrily at the idea.

"Who is that laughing out there?" said an almost sepulchral voice from Arthur's quarters.

"It is I—Tom Ellam, Sir," said the soldier, running up the steps ; "did you call, Sir?"

"Run over to the hospital and tell Mr. Dallas I cannot wait—stop—is the young horse fit to ride?"

"He is scarcely off his physie, yet, Sir."

"Never mind—put a saddle on him directly, and bring him round—do you hear?"

“ Yes, Sir, but—”

“ Do as I order you, Sir, without delay.”

Tom Ellam retreated quite amazed at Arthur's imperious manner; it was so unusual, so unlike his young master; he had, however, nothing to do but to obey, but as he descended the steps, two at a time, he said to the orderly, who was still lingering there: “ I say, Jack, there's a good fellow, just run over to the hospital and tell Mr. Dallas that the Captain is in a mortal hurry, and that there is a screw loose.”

“ Mum's the word—I understand you, Tom,” and the orderly hastened across the savannah to the hospital, while Tom Ellam went to the stable muttering to himself.

Rosalie's first note had agitated and alarmed Arthur, but her second one completely overthrew all his reasoning powers. When the orderly left him he had opened it, and, by the assistance of another glass of wine, he had managed to read it. All, however, that he

could comprehend by her words was, the simple fact, that Marguerite was dying, and that she wished to see him once more before they parted for ever.

In Rosalie's note, which was cold and formal, there was no such meaning, it simply requested his presence at La Belle Etoile, as soon as he could find it convenient, as she had something of importance to communicate; but the idea had fixed itself so completely in his mind, that he could think of nothing else.

The orderly found the surgeon at the hospital, and gave him the message as if from the Captain, but, at the same time, he ventured to hint something about Yellow Jack.

Dallas, pocketing his case of instruments, those horrid symbols of suffering, sent for his horse and rode over to Arthur's quarters.

In the meantime, our hero had been stalking up and down his room like a troubled spirit, muttering to himself—"Will he never come? It will be too late, too late, too late!" He heard

the sound of the horse's feet even on the soft grass of the savannah, and ran out, bareheaded, to see what it was. Dallas was on horseback with an umbrella over his head.

"Go in and get something on your head, Conway," said the surgeon, laughing; "*one coup de soleil* is enough in a day."

Our hero rushed back into his quarters for a hat, inexpressibly provoked at the surgeon's sneering laugh as he thought it. When he came out again, Ellam had brought his horse round. He mounted, and drove his spurs into the horse's sides. It plunged and reared and then started off at full gallop.

"Stop!" cried Dallas, "I'm not in such a hurry, I shall take it easy."

Arthur heeded or heard him not, but continued his frightful speed down the steep declivity, twisting his horse like magic round the sharp angles of the zigzag road. Along the grassy level, skirting the town of the ford, through the deep sand of the tamarind-shaded

track, he dashed madly on, never, for one moment, thinking of his companion, pursued by the one absorbing idea that Marguerite would be dead before he could reach La Belle Etoile. How he got there he never knew. His horse flaked with foam, in a white lather, with heaving flanks, open nostrils, and quivering tail, its sides all bloody, its fetlocks cut by the sharp rocks, was standing with distended legs and neck, outstretched trying to catch its wind when Rosalie, whose quick ears had heard its approach, left Marguerite's room hastily, to meet, as she expected, the doctor. Arthur Conway, exhausted, half-fainting, haggard, splashed from head to foot, was leaning against a post of the verandah. When he saw Rosalie, his senses seemed to return, and taking her hand, with all his frame trembling with nervous excitement, he looked wistfully in her face and said, in a low plaintive voice: "Is she dead—for mercy's sake tell me,—have I come too late?"

Rosalie saw his distress, and her woman's

heart pitied him. So she said quickly : “No, thank God, she lives, and there is hope—pray come in, Captain Conway, and rest yourself.”

“O, speak those blessed words again—tell me once more she is not dead.”

“With God’s blessing she will recover ; but I beseech you do come in—you are exhausted, and I fear ill.”

“Did she ask for me? O let me see her if only for a moment, that I may be convinced of the reality.”

Rosalie could not hesitate any longer to believe that Arthur loved her adopted sister, his unexpected presence, his manner, his words confirmed it. His distress was so palpable, so expressive of love, so real, that all suspicion of his good faith vanished into air. It cannot have been my note, she thought, that has brought him here, poor fellow, so soon : some one must have told him of Marguerite’s illness—his distress will be doubled if I refuse his

request. Alas, she will not know him. It cannot surely be wrong.

“ Follow me,” she said softly ; “ but do not speak and make no noise, for she sleeps.”

Arthur crept on tiptoe behind the fair creole, whose light step was scarcely audible, his heart throbbing so painfully that she could hear it beat.

She pushed the door of Marguerite’s chamber gently open, and looked in.

“ Come,” she whispered to Arthur, “ come, but only for a moment.”

Marguerite’s fair face was pale as alabaster—you could see the tracery of the blue veins in her marble brow. Her eyes were closed, the long, dark silky lashes resting on her cheeks. Her golden hair, released from its confinement, lay in loose disordered tresses on the snowy pillow, her sweet lips now of a soft pale coral colour were partly open, her small pearly teeth fast clenched. The same low moaning sound still came forth from her breast ; but the heav-

ing of her bosom caused the coverlet to rise and fall rapidly. One little hand, white as the driven snow-wreath, rested on her bosom as if to keep down its tumultuous heavings, the other lay twined in her golden tresses. The outline of her figure, so graceful and so rounded, was distinctly visible through the light covering of the bed. But Arthur saw it not. He was only conscious that she was not dead—that she still breathed. He sank on his knees by the bed-side and prayed. He would have remained so for hours had not Rosalie, who had been watching him with the deepest interest, awoke him from his trance-like devotion, saying :

“ Go now, my dear friend, I will come to you shortly.” Then beckoning to the quadroon, she bade her show our hero to her own little boudoir. He rose and followed her like a child.

The act of prayer had calmed him—he was no longer the wild incoherent being he had been but a few minutes before. A softened melancholy, blended with a faint glimmering of

hope, gently and almost unconsciously displaced the terrible ideas that had mocked his reason. The fever of body and mind had subsided, and languid and depressed, with a sad but not desponding heart, he sank upon the sofa in Rosalie's boudoir. It was not to be wondered at that he should be somewhat impatient for the fair creole to rejoin him, but some time elapsed before she came.

Dallas had arrived, but not until nearly an hour after Arthur, having been obliged to ask his way. He pronounced Marguerite's illness to be a case of island fever—not highly dangerous, but requiring much quiet care and attention. The extreme beauty of her face and figure struck him forcibly, and he was no longer at a loss to account for what he had thought insanity in our hero. Nor did the rich luxuriant loveliness and queen-like manners of the dark-eyed creole escape his notice. The elegance and neatness of everything about the house surprized and charmed him; and when

Rosalie took him down to her own boudoir to write his prescription he was perfectly bewildered, for he seemed transported to a fairy palace; and he afterwards confessed that, had he not seen it with his own eyes, he never would have believed that two such women, and such a house, could exist in Dominica.

As Rosalie left them for a moment to themselves, he said to Arthur, who had sat up as they came in and was trying to collect his thoughts :

“ Don’t be unhappy, my dear Conway : it is but a common case of fever, which she will soon get over.”

“ Thank you, Dallas,” replied Arthur, gratefully squeezing the surgeon’s hand. “ Now you understand my madness.”

“ We cannot afford to lose you just at present, so take care of yourself, Conway,” replied the surgeon. “ Take my advice, if you are sufficiently at home here to ask for a bed, you will stay. I shall ride out with Doctor

Gray early in the morning, if I can manage it, and you can return with us. Shall I send your traps out?"

"Thank you, Dallas, for your advice; it suits my inclination, and I think I shall follow it."

"Do, my dear fellow. I can assure you I have already begun to feel a deep interest in the people of this house; no wonder, then, that you are anxious."

Arthur did stay: not only that evening, but the next day, and the next, for Rosalie met the surgeon as he was going away, and he told her frankly that he was afraid Arthur would be seized with fever, if she did not detain him quietly at La Belle Etoile, as the excitement of mind and body had been very great, and both would be heightened if he rode back without rest.

Dallas returned alone.

We must pass over rapidly and briefly the rest of that evening. Rosalie, finding Arthur willing to stay, ordered a room to be got ready

for him, and postponed until the following morning all questions concerning the anonymous letter. Explaining briefly to her father the fact and nature of Marguerite's illness, without giving any reason or surmises as to what had caused it; but, at the same time, hinting as to the probability of Arthur's attachment to her friend to account for his presence, she left them to dine *tête-à-tête*.

They both drank pretty freely; and with the wine old Devrien became very communicative. The conversation naturally turned upon the events of the day, the earthquake, and so to François. The old man said, in reply to a question from Arthur:

"I don't know where that young scamp has gone to, nor what he is about. Peste! though he is no nephew of mine, as people generally suppose him to be, I love him as a son. Indeed, one day, if he will but grow steady, I mean to make him so, if Rosalie will have him. But, *sacristie!* she has a will of her own."

“Is he not your nephew? I thought I heard Mademoiselle Devrien call him her cousin.”

“Not a bit of it! My poor brother François left him and his mother to my care. He is a foundling, but I dare swear he is of gentle blood. By the bye, was not your mother’s name De la Motte?”

“Yes,” replied Arthur, stammering, with his face all flushed and burning; “yes, that was her maiden name. I am called after her, Arthur de la Motte.”

“*Tonnerre de Dieu!* this is strange enough. Why I have heard my brother François say a thousand times that this youngster’s linen, when he was left crying at his door, was marked with F. or E. de la Motte, and when he adopted him, he called him François de la Motte Devrien. Your mother was of noble birth, and a charming woman. I remember her, with bright golden hair like Marguerite’s, before she disappeared with your father from Paris.”

The dark cloud was whirling round Arthur's brain, but the old man did not see the storm he was raising, nor the bitter anguish expressed in our hero's countenance.

“Ah! I remember well what a sensation it created, for I was in Paris at the time. Her father was a harsh man, and a ruined gamester; he wanted her to marry a *roué* marquis, to pay a gambling debt, but she would not have him; and he, I suppose in spite, turned priest, or Jesuit—I forget which. In course of time, it transpired that her father had given her the choice of wedding this man, or of being shut up for life in a convent; but she being a determined young woman, and a Huguenot to boot, preferred a living, handsome young Englishman to the mortification of perpetual seclusion.”

At first every word pierced Arthur's heart with a scorpion-sting, but gradually a faint, indistinct light glimmered in his mind that his host might know something of his mother's marriage. He was afraid—ashamed to ask.

Yet, Marguerite ! Edith ! Morley ! what was there not in the question ?—but then the reply !

“ I do not know my poor mother’s history well,” he said, mournfully. “ She could never bear to speak of that time. I have often, as a boy, pressed her to tell me, but her tears and agony prevented her. When she fled from this terrible persecution, did she marry my father directly ?”

“ Who ever doubted that she did, young man ? I, myself, after some years, heard that she had married Mr. Conway, and was living with him in England, and that she had given him a son.”

“ Ah ! if I could but prove it !” thought Arthur, “ for Marguerite’s sake !” But he said no more.

It may seem strange that our hero did not question the old man further regarding François Devrien, but it must be remembered that his mental energies were prostrated—his senses

were still in a confused whirl. Excitement and dejection succeeding one another rapidly, had given his nervous system a shock from which it would take days to recover. Independently of the bodily fatigue he had undergone during that day, hope and fear, love and despair, had alternately raised and depressed his spirits to such a degree, that no one can be astonished that he found himself utterly unable to keep up the conversation with the kind, but garrulous old man.

He asked permission to retire.

As he was going to his chamber, Rosalie slipped out from Marguerite's room, and bade him good night, comforting him with the assurance that her charge was better.

Our hero felt and appreciated the delicate kindness of the lovely creole.

CHAPTER IV.

THE eventful day had now concluded, and we have accounted for most of the principal *dramatis personæ* of our tale who have acted in it.

Something, however, remains to be told, before we draw the curtain for the night. Frist, how the Carib came to be at the head of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Secondly, how Tom Ellam and Fighting Tom Connolly trapped the two French conspirators, Le Bar and Petun.

It may be remembered that the Carib was

present during part of the conversation between Le Blanc and Marinier, in the house where the two conspirators lived. He listened attentively to all they said, although apparently occupied with his pipe : he could not understand all their words, but his keen senses gathered some of their meaning, particularly in regard to our hero. His instinctive passion of hate, revealed to him that Marinier was an enemy to his friend, the English Captain ; and, in his mind, there were but two feelings, friendship and enmity. Marinier was plotting against his friend, therefore the Carib was Marinier's enemy.

He had been hovering about the house ever since the conspirators had returned from La Maison Vide, unwilling for a moment to lose sight of his intended victim. His hearing the conversation then was purely accidental, and, had it not been for the mention of Conway's rank and description of person, his ears would have remained closed, and his senses buried in apathy.

It was not, however, until he had been satisfied by Le Blanc, and by personal observation, that the fly had not strength to break through the mesh he had woven for him, that he went up to the Morne to see our hero, telling Le Blanc that he was going to the mountains.

His own nature prompted him to watch Marinier—he had therefore returned to the dilapidated house very early in the morning, and there he had warned Le Blanc of the coming earthquake, and asked him where he was going.

Le Blanc was sleeping at the time, and told the Chief without hesitation of their intended visit to the waterfall.

Le Baron departed abruptly, taking with him his bow, a quiver full of arrows, and a light-handled axe, and preceding the young Frenchman to the ford, he concealed himself near it, amidst the shrubs that nearly filled a cleft in the rock.

He saw the party arrive, one by one, and set out on their ride up the valley: scarcely had

they left the spot, when a man, mounted on a fine mule, crossed the river and followed them. Notwithstanding his disguise, the Carib easily recognised Marinier. He immediately suspected treachery, and keeping a little behind, he walked after them, watching every motion of the Jesuit. He saw him ride up to the young negro slave, and heard them speaking, though he could not catch what they said. At the second ford, above the mill, where Arthur and Marguerite had stopped to let their horses drink, he saw Marinier pass them. His bow was strung in an instant, and from behind a rock, close to the stream, he took deliberate aim at the Jesuit. Marinier passed on, and the arrow never left the bow. Again, when Marinier drew up his mule against the face of the cliff to look at Marguerite, the Carib was very near. The slightest hostile movement on the part of the Jesuit, and the arrow would have sped on its course. The lovers started off in a canter, and Marinier was left behind, but he rode steadily

on: when they crossed the river below the gorge, he got off his mule, and fastened it to the shrubs. Then he crept on with stealthy pace along the narrow path, and concealed himself behind a rock, not twenty yards from the old mangrove-tree, but close behind him was Le Baron. When the earth began to tremble, Marinier, narrowly escaping the falling rock, which had destroyed the track, rushed back down the dangerous path to secure his mule, and mounting it, he rode back towards Roseau. The Carib, as soon as the shock had ceased, left his concealment and followed him for a short distance; but seeing that he was really returning towards the town, he determined to wait until Arthur should pass on his way back. The events related in a former chapter then took place. We must now follow Marinier. When the Jesuit had again crossed the ford near the town, and was riding along the turf by the river's bank, an old negro started suddenly out from behind a broken wall

and came towards him. It was old Auguste Pierrot. He drew Marinier behind the wall.

“ O wurra, wurra, Massa,” he said, wringing his old bony hands. “ Tap, tap, Massa Marinier, our house all full of buckra sodgers. O, wurra, wurra, dat ole Pierrot should lib to see dis day.”

“ Ha ! has some one turned traitor, Auguste?”

“ Ole Pierrot no sabe but dat true, in dey come, bayonets fixed—surrender in de name ob de King. Le Bar fire pistol one, two—bang, bang. One sodger fall down, but de rest all rush togedder at Le Bar. Knock him down. Petun gib himself up ; den dey put chains on dere hands and begin searchee, searchee all ober de house—take um papers all dey find.”

“ And how did you escape, Auguste?” inquired the Jesuit.

“ Wen dey find de sailor man in leetle room, one sodger say, Hein Sailor Captain what he do here ? den dey see me, and I told em, me here to wait on sick sailor berry bad fever, den one

sodger say, pose him put de darbies too on ole nigger; but Serjeant say no. Poor old brute—he callee me brute—is only hospittle-orderly, nebber mind him; so dey march away with de two citizens and leab me with sick man.”

“ But you said that there were still soldiers there.”

“ Ees, Massa; by-em-by Corporal wid tree men come back—dey ask me wedder one Marinier lib dere; and if ole nigger know where he be? Pierrot no tell—him sabe noting bout citizen Marinier, ha, ha!”

“ Who has told the soldiers about me?—who has betrayed us? Can it be Le Blanc, or his friend the native? Let me reflect. No, it must have been my own cursed folly! These drunken soldiers must have been too cunning for me, or that hot-headed Le Bar has been making a fool of himself. I must try something fresh.”

“ Ole Pierrot tink Le Blanc is de traider.”

“Why do you imagine such an improbability?”

“’Cause him give Pierrot a letter to take up to de Marne for buckra officer.”

“Did you do it, Auguste?”

“No, Massa Marinier, ole Pierrot too ’cute for dat.”

“What have you done with the letter? Let me see it.”

“Ole Pierrot burned it,” replied the nigger, with a cunning grin.

“But you have not told me how you got away.”

“Dat berry easy; buckra sodgers take berry leetle notice of old nigger, as dey call me; dey let old Pierrot go fetch med’cine for sick sailor.”

“And you came and hid yourself here to warn me?”

“Ees, Massa Marinier, you clebber man, you nebber tell ole Pierrot him monkey, him ole fool, like citoyen Le Blanc.”

“It would be dangerous for me to go back into Roseau at present; what do you think I had

better do, Auguste?" replied Marinier, not that he thought the negro could help him, but to humour his pride. It had, however, without his being at first aware of it, an unexpected effect on old Pierrot.

"Keep in de shadow of the walls, or dey will see us. Aha, dat will do. Now, Massa Marinier, listen to what ole Pierrot say. Him got plenty of dallar when he teachee de niggers to dance. He buy house and bit of ground for his son—he be free man, same as his fader—and marry free woman too, berry ansome mulatto gal, de house 'crass de river 'bout tree four mile, leetle way up the hiles; here him grow yams, patetes, plantains, plenty of vegetables; sell 'em in Roseau—'pose citizen Marinier go to dat house with old Pierrot—him berry safe, and plenty welcome."

Marinier mused for some moments.

"Thank you, Auguste. I think it is the best thing I can do for the present. Can I write a letter there?"

"Ob course, Massa! You not pose dat ole

Pierrot and his son like common niggers, heh ! plenty of pen and ink, plenty books too. Jesuit priest teach ole Pierrot read and write—him got grand eddication, not like nigger slave, who yam and sleep all de day when no workee.”

“Shall I find any one there to send the letter by—he can ride the mule?”

“Ees, Massa, plenty.”

“Then I will go with you and claim your son’s hospitality for a short time—can you walk so far, or will you get on the mule, and let me go on foot?”

“Dat not do—negro man ride, buckra gentleman go on foot—no—no,” said the old man, deeply gratified, however, with the offer, “plenty of life in ole Pierrot yet—see.”

And the wizened old negro began to caper and dance about.

“Let us lose no time, then.”

They crossed the ford, and went for several miles in the direction of La Belle Etoile ; the

old negro stepping along like a young man, and keeping pace with the mule. Leaving the path by the sea-beach suddenly, he led the way along a dry watercourse, and up a steep, winding track, amidst prickly pears and cactus plants; then through a piece of wilderness where the path seemed lost amidst the luxuriant undergrowth of weeds, which, notwithstanding the thick foliage of the branches overhead, flourished in wonderful profusion and variety to a cleared spot of about an acre. The house stood in the centre of a hollow, and was shaded by a few fine silk, cotton-trees. Patches of Indian-corn, sugar-canes, yams and sweet potatoes, divided by rows of plantain-trees, were planted on three sides. On the fourth side was the well, with a hedge of Barbadoes pride screening the whole from a broken ravine that ran between the plantation and the shrub-covered cliff which overhung the sea-beach. Cocks and hens were strutting about, feasting on the myriads of insects, and two or three

handsome guinea-birds ran screaming through the long grass. A pig came grunting out, and a dog barked as they approached.

Our space will not permit us to relate the introduction of Marinier to the inhabitants of this snug little plantation: suffice it to say, that he was hospitably received by its inmates, who were, indeed, of a superior description to negroes in general. Madame Pierrot might once have been handsome, but age had long since defaced all traces of it, for in that race, beauty vanishes with extreme youth. Pen and ink there was as the old dancing-master had boasted, and Marinier, drawing a half-written letter from his pocket, sat down and finished it; and mounting one of the sons, a tall negro of twenty, who had just come out from Roseau before them, upon his mule, he despatched the letter to its destination, and requested the bearer to ride afterwards into Roseau, to return the mule to a certain direction, which he gave him.

The effect of that letter has been already seen ; Marinier slept in his new domicile, nor did he leave it for some time afterwards. And now having seen him safely lodged for the night, we must, for a brief period, return to Roseau to relate how the gamekeeper of Morley, and Fighting Tom Connolly snared the Frenchmen.

The two dressing themselves in smock-frocks with foraging caps on their heads, started off, early in the morning, for Roseau, leaving word, with the sergeant of the guard, where they were to be found when he should send the picquet out to search for them. One of the men, who had been at the public-house when Marinier had bribed Tom Connolly, was to accompany the non-commissioned officer in charge of the picquet, whose fire-locks were to be loaded in case of any resistance. Martial-law was then in force over the whole island, and there was no need to apply to the civil power for assistance or authority to search for traitors.

The two soldiers had the precaution to take their bayonets with them concealed under their frocks, for they did not exactly know with whom they would have to deal.

The grog-shop was situated in a narrow street that led to the Market-place, the end of it being nearly opposite to the mouth of the lane, at the bottom of which, looking out upon the sea, stood the dilapidated house occupied by the conspirators.

All along the narrow street, and on both sides, were several low public-houses, or spirit-stores. Indeed, every fifth house bore some strange name, who declared himself ready to sell spirits by retail.

The two soldiers entered the 'Blue Anchor' stealthily, as if they did not wish to be noticed, and, calling for the host, they ordered some breakfast, an unusual occurrence, and one likely to lead to questions from their entertainer. The host was a man of some notoriety, having been a sailor—some said a pirate—in his youth. He

had now established himself nominally as a publican, but in reality as a crimp. Nothing, however, by which he could turn a penny—honest or otherwise—came amiss to Amos Jones. He was not a negro, but he could hardly be called a white man, for his face was of all colours, red predominating, particularly at the tip of his nose. His cheeks were furrowed with small-pox, he had but one eye, and wore a tow wig. Once upon a time, he had been a tall man, but his right leg having been broken—he said, in action; report, in a drunken fit—the sinew had contracted, and an iron prop sustained his weight instead of his proper walking implement. The other, or perfect limb, had gradually bowed itself out, to accommodate itself to the length of the iron, which had originally been made too short. His arms, chest, and shoulders were of great size and power, and he stumped about on his iron pin with surprising activity. No one knew whence he came, nor to what nation or creed he belonged. If he were not a Jew, he

certainly was no Christian. He ate pork, and despised religious mummary, as he called it. True, he worshipped Mammon in the form of dollars and bits, and offered in return for his favour gritty coffee, yams, raw rum, and a villainous compound that he called Hollands, which, with lodging, he furnished to every runaway sailor on the look-out for another ship, at his own price.

Amos Jones came stumping out of his den, leering suspiciously at the two soldiers with his one eye.

“I say, old chap,” said Fighting Tom, who was spokesman; “can you give us some breakfast?”

“Eh — what? Breakfast, did you say? Why do such fellows as you come to the ‘Blue Anchor’ for breakfast—eh?”

“Mona mi dhaouil! Get out of that, with your questions, and give us some coffee at onst, for we’re in a mortal hurry,” said Fighting Tom.

"No offence, my fine fellows—I meant no offence ; but it does look strange to see two soldiers out at this time of the morning, wanting their breakfasts."

"We are going to take a little walk in the country—that's all," chimed in Ellam, "and want something to eat before we start."

"Leg-bail ! French leave ! Eh?" replied the ogre, with a wink of his one eye.

"Not exactly," replied the gamekeeper, with a knowing look at Fighting Tom. "We are only going to look for a little, oldish Frenchman we met here a day or two back, to get a little money from him, if we can earn it."

"Ah ! they don't pay you well up there, then ?"

"Blood and turf ! they don't give us enough to buy bacca with," interrupted Fighting Tom.

"Who's to pay for your breakfast, then ? It's against the rules of the house to go on tick."

“ Sarve you right, you stingy old omadhawn, if we went to another kip,” said Connolly, putting his hand into his pocket, and pulling out several loose dollars.

Amos Jones’s one eye twinkled with delight when he heard the chink of the coin, but he was still suspicious. He wanted to know how a private soldier came by so much money, so he asked Tom where he got the dollars.

“ They don’t grow on the trees, honey, though there’s plenty more where these came from.”

“ My comrade means that they are French dollars,” said Ellam. “ They’re not drawn from the chest. The truth is,” he added, confidentially, “ we are on the look-out for a new master, and want to see the little Frenchman to help us to one ; and, if you will put us in the way of it, and give us some breakfast, we don’t mind standing a dollar or so.”

“ Let’s finger them first, my boy—that’s what I call doing business.”

“ Here, you greedy cratur !” said Connolly,

pretending to be indignant, but pitching a couple of dollars to the host, who caught them in the air; "give us a bit to eat, and a morning."

Amos Jones was dignified. Could a man of his consequence condescend to get breakfast for private soldiers? Not he. But, sticking his hands into his capacious breeches pockets, and jingling the dollars, he called out: "Here, you black scoundrel, King George, fry some pork and yams, and look slippy, or I'll skin you."

"Yes, Massa Amos," replied a squeaking voice inside, "but dare no pork, no plantain; cockwaches yam all up."

"What do you mean, you young nigger? I'll cowhide you white, if I don't may I never handle a dollar again!" screamed the host, stumping off into the kitchen, apparently in an awful rage.

The soldiers exchanged a knowing wink, and the gamekeeper whispered to Fighting Tom: "Depend upon it he'll send for him; I only hope it will be the right one."

Tom Ellam was not wrong in his conjecture.

Amos Jones had an eye to business. Marinier and Le Bar had already paid him handsomely for the use of his room, when they had on previous occasions gone there to see what good they could do with the soldiers. Besides, he had a great contempt for all existing authorities, if they did not pay him.

“Scuttle off, you young nigger, over the way, to the house at the end of the lane, and tell the Frenchmen that there are two soldiers at the ‘Blue Anchor,’ waiting to see them.”

King George started off, as if the devil had kicked him, glad to escape without a cuff, or a blow on the shins.

Amos then taking down from a shelf a jar of Hollands, went back to the soldiers, and filling three tin tots with the deleterious compound, handed one to each of the soldiers, reserving the third for himself, and saying he had sent the slave for some yams, invited them to take a morning.

Had Marinier been in the house, he would

probably have proceeded with more caution. But Le Bar was hot-headed and headstrong, and he obeyed, without suspicion, the summons he had received from Amos Jones.

The host received him at the door, and whispered to him, in bad French: "It's all right, Mounseer, there's two lobsters inside, ready for a start your way."

Tom Ellam looked under his eyelids carefully at Le Bar. He knew at once it was not the man he wanted. Le Bar was tall, had grey eyes, and light hair, with reddish whiskers; his man was short, thin, black-eyed, dark-haired, and had no whiskers.

While breakfast was getting ready, Le Bar seated himself by the soldiers, and entered into conversation with them, as if he had casually dropped in. He could speak broken English sufficiently to make himself understood, and after a little sparring and manœuvring on both sides, the soldiers let out that they were going to desert. Le Bar hinted that they might as

well join the Republicans, and enforced his argument by slipping an eight-dollar piece into each of the soldiers' hands, promising them promotion and double pay. Connolly seemed to demur to the terms, and Ellam began to reason with him upon it, saying that they could not go back now. The Irishman turned his head away, and flattened his nose against the dirty glass of the small window that looked out upon the street, as if sulky, muttering that Tom Ellam was making a bad bargain.

"Breakfast's ready, gentlemen," said Amos, with a grin. The Frenchman had put half-a-joe into his hand as he came in, and the feel of the gold had rendered him polite.

"By Jabers ! there's the picquet coming down the street," cried Tom at the window.

"They're looking for us," replied the gamekeeper, in alarm.

"They're searching the grog-shops," continued Connolly ; "they've stopped at one at the top of the street. What shall we do ?"

“ I shall bolt, and take my chance.”

“ Ay, you’ll get off cheap enough, you’ve a good character ; but the halberds and five hundred for me, if I’m cotched. I say, Amos, can’t you hide a chap somewhere snug ?”

“ What will you stand ? there’s a law against harbouring deserters—the penalty’s heavy.”

“ Damn you for a stingy old cripple,” replied Tom.

“ They’ve come out of one public and are going into the next. There’s no one outside : I’m off, Tom—take care of yourself ;” and Ellam bolted from the ‘ Blue Anchor,’ down the street, round the corner of the Market-place—but there he stopped.

“ I won’t budge an inch, and I’ll split if I’m taken,” said Connolly, sulkily.

“ Come, my fine fellow, and I’ll hide you,” said Le Bar. “ Amos, lend me that old panama and a coat—and here’s another half joe.”

They put a straw hat on Connolly’s head and a sailor’s frock outside his own, and, taking

him by the arm, the Frenchman walked quietly out of the 'Blue Anchor' just as the picquet of soldiers entered another public-house. They crossed the Market-place without attracting notice, and walking rapidly down the narrow lane, Le Bar pushed a door open, and, telling Tom Connolly to follow, he went up stairs to the room where Le Blanc had slept the night before. Petun was sitting at the table outlining in ink a map, or plan, in which were sketched all the defences and weak points of the island, with remarks at the foot as to the number of men, and what guns were mounted in the garrison.

"Is that you at last, Marinier?" he said, without looking up. "Come and look at this, and tell me if it will do for Victor."

"It is I, Le Bar, come back with a friend, Petun—a promising recruit too. There were two of them, but one bird was shy, he flew off at the sight of a red coat, so I think we have got the best of the brace."

Petun looked up from his work, surveying Fighting Tom from head to foot, with a grim smile. Connolly met his eye steadily, not a muscle of his countenance moved.

“ You have been very rash,” said Petun, in a savage tone, addressing Le Bar. “ Look at that man, I tell you he is a traitor.”

“ Traitor to your teeth, you French black-guard,” replied Tom, boldly.

Petun drew a pistol out, cocked it, and pointed at Tom Connolly’s head. He did not flinch, but said coolly:

“ Be asy now with your arms. Is this the way you shake hands with your friends? I’m Tipperary, and don’t care a traneeen for the likes of you—see that now.”

“ You’re a bold man to venture here unarmed, and by yourself. From this house you never stir, except feet foremost, without you take the oath.”

“ That’s just what I want, your honour,” said the Irishman, simply. “ I’m used to that

sort of thing in Tipperary, and I'll kiss the crass whenever your honour likes."

"Bring out the flag and the box, Le Bar, and let the Irishman see the cross he has to kiss."

"They will soon be here," thought Connolly, "and I may as well humour the thieves of the world, and see all their dodges, the jokers."

Le Bar opened a small closet in one corner of the room, and took from it a square mahogany box, and a silk flag.

"Is that the book I'm to kiss?" said Tom, with great simplicity. "If your honour will mark it with a crass, I've no objections, as I'm a good Catholic."

"Wait, fool!" thundered Petun, touching the spring, and disclosing the guillotine, and again pointing his pistol at the Irishman.

"Shure your honour's joking with me," said Connolly, neither flinching nor even winking an eye. "What is that now? Will you just tell a poor boy what it means?"

“The scoundrel is laughing at us!” said Petun, in French, to Le Bar. “Touch the spring again.”

The knife fell as before, and the head of the figure rolled off, and the red fluid spirted out.

“So perish all traitors!” said the two Frenchmen, solemnly.

“Amen!” replied Tom.

Le Bar now drew a pistol also from his breast, and both of them held the muzzles pointed at the Irishman across the table.

“Swear or die!” cried Petun, hoarsely.

“Swear or die!” echoed Le Bar.

“It’s a mighty purty toy, gentlemen, and the little man’s head ’s cut off very nately. So your honours, I’m ready to swear.”

“Lay your hand, then, on the box, and repeat the oath after me,” said Petun. “I swear by the guillotine—”

“By the holies! that”—said Tom, interrupting him, for he thought he heard the sound of a

measured tread, like that of soldiers,—“that’s a queer thing to swear by, anyhow!”

A loud knocking was now heard below, and the sound of a door burst open.

“Treachery!” cried Le Bar.

“Oh, where will I hide myself!” said Tom, suddenly, upsetting the table and dodging behind it just as Le Bar pulled the trigger. The bullet scattered in fragments the figure of Liberty, but the silk flag and the table stopped its further course.

Petun, who was in heart a coward, sank down helpless and trembling on a chair, and the pistol fell from his hand.

The soldiers, guided by the report of fire-arms, rushed up stairs, and in a minute the room was filled with armed men.

“Surrender, all of you, in the King’s name: down with your arms!” cried the sergeant in command.

Le Bar had snatched up the fallen pistol. Without reflecting, he pointed it at the door,

and, as the soldiers entered, he pulled the trigger. One of the soldiers fell badly wounded. Then the party rushed on Le Bar and Petun and secured them, handling them not over-gently.

Tom Connolly crept out from under the table, with a ludicrous expression on his face, and picking up the damaged box, he set it on its bottom, and apostrophized it thus :

“Blessed Mary, look at this ! What would Father Corrigan have said, if iver I went back to ould Ireland, and confessed that I, Tom Connolly, of Boriesoleagh, a true Catholic, had purjured myself on a box with a knife in it, widout the ghost of a crass cut on it. ‘By the bite and the rock of Cashel,’ he’d say, ‘I was desaving him.’ So this is what they call the guillotine ! Well, Tom Connolly, you’re the first boy has been saved by it, anyhow. Glory be to God.”

And Fighting Tom crossed himself gravely. The soldiers, as old Pierrot had told Marinier,

then searched the house from top to bottom, carrying off everything they could find of a suspicious nature.

Jack Diver, in a state of high fever, was discovered in the little room with the old negro, crouched under the hammock. Some of the men who had come out from England in the 'Sally,' recognised the sailor, though they could not account for his being in such company. Seeing he was unable to move, they left him in old Pierrot's care for further instructions; and taking their two prisoners with them, they left the house, at the door of which a considerable crowd had already collected. Tom Ellam was outside, waiting to see the prisoners: he looked at them attentively, neither of them was his man. He went back to the house with Tom Connolly and a corporal, and questioned old Pierrot; but in vain—there was no trace of Marinier. Just at this time, the earth began to quake, and they ran out into the Market-place, without thinking anything more of the old

negro. Earthquakes have a wonderful effect on the reflecting powers.

As Le Bar and Petun will not appear again in this story, it may be as well to mention what became of them—they were tried, convicted, and hanged.

CHAPTER V.

DALLAS and Doctor Gray rode out early in the morning to see Marguerite : they found her a little better, though still unconscious of anything that was passing around her. Arthur had not risen from his couch. A note was left for him, briefly relating the capture of Le Bar and Petun, and requesting his instructions as to what was to be done with the Master of the transport. Our hero had only heard of the arrest of the conspirators, not of how their capture was effected. Rosalie's note and the surgeon's summons having completely effaced it

from his mind. The two men returned to Roseau.

After breakfast, Rosalie begged the favour of a few minutes' conversation with Arthur, in her own little boudoir. He went there with a palpitating heart. As this conversation tends materially to the development of this story, we must give some of it in detail.

After many questions and replies concerning Marguerite, in which our hero's anxiety and eagerness to hear the slightest detail betrayed his love, and Rosalie's comforting assurances told her sympathy, the fair creole said :

"Do not think me rude, or inquisitive, Captain Conway, if I ask you some questions. I am aware they may seem impertinent ; but for Marguerite's sake, and your own, my dear friend, if you will allow me to call you so, they must be put."

"My kindest friend," replied Arthur, taking her hand, "after what you did for me last night, do you think I could refuse you anything?"

“Do not be too confident. Alas! I fear I must inflict some pain—perhaps open afresh a wound scarce healed over.”

“Rosalie, I am prepared. The events of yesterday I feel have changed my nature. My folly has been revealed to me. My weakness, my apathy—nay more, my guilt—in the visions of the night, all, all declared themselves. Rosalie, I love the sweet Marguerite; but I am not worthy of her love.”

“I rejoice to hear you say so, for Marguerite’s sake, poor girl; she would die if she doubted it.”

“Die! Yes, that is it, die! and I the cause. O, God! forgive me.”

“You mistake me, I fear, my dear friend. I said, that if you did not love Marguerite, she would die. But you do love her, and she will live to bless that love.”

“Can you doubt it, Rosalie? But oh, that terrible day-dream!” said Conway, with bitter anguish, pressing his hands against his forehead, to still the throbbing of his temples.

Rosalie looked at him with tears in her eyes and pity in her heart. The intention of the letter was to wither an already-blighted heart. She saw it, she read it in his agony. Yet she thought that she had a duty to perform.

“Can you bear it now, my dear friend?” she said, in a sweet, low voice, “or shall I postpone it until your strength is recovered from the shock of yesterday?”

“Say on,” replied Arthur, moodily, “nothing now can give me pain.” And he looked so sad, so woe-begone, that Rosalie’s heart had nearly failed her, but she remembered Marguerite and her lover’s parting injunction; sooner or later the truth must be known, or Marguerite would die. She rose, unlocked a desk, and took out a folded paper. Arthur watched her with intense curiosity, yet with anguish in his heart.

She sat down again by his side, trembling and fearfully nervous; she had a duty to perform, painful and perplexing to her kind and feeling heart. No one to guide her now—

nothing to assist her in her delicate task; nothing to lull the storm she might raise; nothing to strengthen her woman's heart, but her love for Marguerite, and a conscience void of offence. She began to read the letter, omitting the first part.

“A noble mansion stands amidst stately oak-trees in the warm West. The mottled deer are resting under their shade. The park slopes away to a silver trout-stream—blue hills rise in the distance.”

“That is Morley Hall!” exclaimed Arthur, almost unconsciously. Rosalie continued to read, without apparently noticing his exclamation.

“There is a maiden standing at an open window. The sun rays fall on her waving tresses—her eyes are beaming with love and pleasure. See, she has a letter in her hand, which she raises to her lips and kisses. Let us read the post mark—it is Dominica. She opens it.”

“Yet I have never written,” he muttered, gloomily. Rosalie looked at him with increased curiosity, his senses were apparently entirely abstracted, yet he was commenting on the letter. She went on.

“A shadowy valley. A lofty mountain—a silver stream springing forth from its side. A deep, silent pool. A vast, solitary mangrove-tree. The earth shakes. The mountains bow their heads. The rocks thunder down. A fair-haired maiden rests in the arms of a young and handsome cavalier. She is listening to his honeyed words. She is happy, for she believes them.”

“The waterfall! The earthquake! Marguerite!” he said, musingly.

Rosalie shuddered, the worst was yet to come, but she read on.

“Yet this maiden also is betrayed. Can one man love two maidens? Ask him of the noble oaks, the leaping trout-stream, he will answer; but of the maiden he has betrayed he will not

speak to the maiden he is betraying. But whisper the name of the absent one softly in his ear, and behold the result. It is a sweet name, and the maiden is worthy of it. It is Edith !”

“Edith!” he cried, in bitter agonized accents, starting up wildly from his sofa ; “ who speaks of Edith ?” Then, sinking down again, he murmured, in a broken voice, “Who speaks of Edith ? I loved her once, but she forsook me ! Who speaks of Edith ? Is she dead ?”

Rosalie fairly wept—the mystery was fully revealed.

There was silence for a few moments : Arthur passed his hand across his eyes.

“ What is this that you are reading to me ?” he said, sadly, like one awakening from a fearful dream. “ Who is it that recalls scenes to this wretched heart, that were better for ever forgotten ? tell me, my sweet friend.”

“ It is a letter to Marguerite Gordon.”

“ To Marguerite ! and she has read it ! My

God, it will kill her! Who has done this?" he added, in a fierce voice, again starting up wildly. "I will tear his heart out—the snake-like, treacherous villain. Who is he? tell me, Rosalie."

"Calm yourself, my dear friend; indeed I know not who he is, there is no signature to the letter."

"Yet are the pictures to the life," he said, slowly, again sitting down. "It is a masterpiece, drawn from nature by a skilful hand—Morley—Edith—the valley—Marguerite. Let me reflect. Tell me, my kind friend, how came this letter here?"

Rosalie told him briefly how she had found Marguerite in a fainting fit, with the letter lying open upon the floor, near her chair; how, partly out of curiosity, but more to ascertain if it had anything to do with Marguerite's sudden and unaccountable illness, she had looked into it; and how, finding no signature, she had thought it right to read it through. How she had consulted her cousin François (here Rosalie

blushed deeply), and the advice he had given her. How, after he had gone, she had written to him requesting his presence at La Belle Etoile, though she had not meant to bring him out so soon; and how, finding that he was distressed, fatigued and ill, she had not spoken to him on the subject on the evening before, but had reserved it until his strength was more recovered, and his senses calmer.

“ But you have not told me how this letter came here, Rosalie. Did you make any inquiry as to who brought it ? ”

“ Yes, my dear friend, I did : believe me, I felt for you deeply, not only for poor Marguerite’s sake, but for your own. I did not wish to alarm my dear father, so I questioned Marguerite’s maid myself. It appears that the letter was brought by a negro, who rode out from Roseau on a mule : she took it from him, and placed it on her mistress’s dressing-table. .

“ Did she ask him from whom it came ? ”

“ She did ; but he only laughed and paid her

some compliment—you could not expect poor Fanfan to reflect.”

“Whoever it is, he must have known me in England, yes, and been present at the waterfall when the rock fell down,” said Arthur, musingly, for the cloud had passed away.

“Have you no enemy, my dear friend? Is there not some subtle, but venomous, serpent who wishes to sting you silently and secretly?”

“No, Rosalie: I have injured no one, why should I have a hidden enemy?”

“Know you any one called Marinier?”

“Marinier—Marinier! Ay, the Carib mentioned such a name; and, now I think of it, the faithful Tom Ellam warned me that one bearing that name was trying to seduce the soldiers, and making strange inquiries about me. From his description, Ellam, who was formerly a gamekeeper at Morley, thought that he had once seen him there. Ah! I remember it all now Where have my senses been?”

“Was the Carib, who told you of this Mari-

nier a chief?" inquired Rosalie, who had been listening very attentively to his somewhat incoherent speech.

"Yes, he told me so. He is called the Captain Baron. It was he who helped us across the chasm."

"Then, Captain Conway, depend upon it, the Carib must have been the man who was watching us."

"Could not he himself have described the scene to some one?"

"It was my cousin François who told me this," said Rosalie, with a blush, not answering his question. "I showed him the letter, and he left a message for you, bidding me be sure and give it you from him, for he said you would be able to repay him fourfold, and I am confident he is right, and the Carib has nothing to do with it."

"Your cousin! Must I call him so?"

"Yes—yes; pray do!"

“Your cousin, then, knows this Carib Chief?”

“I believe so,” said Rosalie, hesitatingly, for she began to feel that she might be getting into a scrape. “Let me give you his message, as near as I can remember it. He said you had a bitter, implacable (yes, that was his word), implacable enemy in Dominica, who writes letters to some one in England. His name—or the name he is known by—is Marinier—a Jesuit, I think he said; and the Carib knows something about his whereabouts.” Then she added, hastily: “I must leave you for a few minutes; but wait for me. I will return soon.”

“This is all very strange and mysterious!” thought Arthur, whose reflecting powers were completely restored to him. “I do not like to ask this kind-hearted, loving girl about her cousin, as she calls him. But how could he know this Marinier, and his secret enmity to me? It is very suspicious! He knows the

Carib Chief, and this Marinier, who is no doubt a conspirator, though he has escaped for the present. Let me see ! Dallas's description of the two taken is short, but it may guide me. Le Bar and Petun are their names—they have lived some time in Roseau, or the neighbourhood. He is a stranger, so the Carib said. One tall, fair-haired, grey-eyed ; the other short, stout, and rather corpulent, bald, and red-whiskered. Ellam, I think, said that Marinier was thin, pale, and black-eyed, sharp-featured and without whiskers. It is evident, then, that he is still at large. There is certainly a conspiracy against us in the island of a serious nature. Can François Devrien have any connection with it ? He was with Jack Diver, who had been found in the house of the traitors. Could he be a traitor too ? In his hyperbolical language, the Carib had hinted at a red ant traitor, whom the wasp would sting to death, because he hated him. The Master of the ' Sally ' had insulted the Chief grossly and barbarously. He had

interposed, and saved him from suffering and indignity. The Carib might be grateful to the one, and wish for revenge upon the other. François Devrien had not shown any knowledge of the Carib Chief at the waterfall, but now he owned that he was well acquainted with him. Then, Devrien had departed suddenly — he might have some suspicion that the conspiracy would be discovered, and had fled—whither? Could he ask Rosalie?” As he was endeavouring to arrange in his mind the tangled and confused ideas which Rosalie’s words had so suddenly conjured up before him, the fair creole returned; and, again seating herself by him, she said :

“ I have seen my father, my friend, and asked him about Marinier. He knows no such name, but recommended that you should immediately send to the post-office to inquire if any letters had come for a person of that name, and to put them on their guard, should letters arrive in future, as to his character. And now, my dear

friend, I am going to ask you a favour, which I hope you will not refuse, for Marguerite's sake. Let me be able to dissipate her fears when she is strong enough to hear my voice—let that dreadful letter, to a remembrance of which she will awake, be as a dream. Tell me your history, that I may repeat it to her. Tell me that you love her fondly, that I may gladden her heart. She deserves it—she is worthy of a pure, undivided, unselfish love. She has slept in wretchedness, let her wake to happiness. Will you not, my dear friend ?”

It would have been difficult for any one to resist the winning look of the lovely, warm-hearted creole.

It was not, however, without a struggle that Arthur commenced his history, but, when he did, he told it freely and passionately.

He told her of his boyish love, of the Grange, of his cousins, of poor Dinah ; then of Oxford, of Sir William Deverell's strange will, his hopes and his fears, his illness, and his mother's sad

death. Then he passed to Morley : how gradually it was hinted, then rumoured abroad, that his mother had never been married, how once more he had declared his love to Edith, how she had scornfully rejected him, and then how, in the bitterness of his heart—in his unsupportable anguish, he had given up all idea of disputing his uncle's claim to Morley, and had basely fled, deserting his mother's cause like a coward. How he had entered the army, and had chosen an unhealthy climate, where war was raging, that he might die.

He revealed all, concealing nothing, perverting nothing. All that he knew, all that he felt.

Then, how he had been interested in Marguerite's story ; how she had charmed him by her simplicity and beauty ; how he had hoped to forget in her love the sadness and mortification of his spirit ; and how her sudden illness had driven him to the verge of insanity.

Of his secret enemy he could tell nothing, for he knew nothing—not even that he had one.

“ I am not worthy of dear Marguerite’s love,” he said, after his sad tale was concluded ; “ for I have allowed my mother’s fair fame to be dishonoured. I have no title even to my name ! What right has a coward—a bastard, to seek the love of such a bright and noble being ? Oh, Rosalie ! when she hears my miserable history, will she not despise me ? The world will point me out as a disgraced, dishonoured being !”

. The fair creole answered, kindly :

“ Compose yourself, my dear friend. Do not look at things through so gloomy a medium. Marguerite loves you—she will ever love you, through good or bad report. Pray only that she may soon recover. I promise you, with the help of God, that she shall love you dearly—dearly !”

“ It can never be ! I am fated to be unhappy myself, and to cast misery around me !”

“ Do you not see that, in all this,” continued Rosalie, “ you have two powerful enemies, one

hidden and mysterious, but whomay yetbe brought to light? the other—forgive me, my dear friend—is your self-willed, desponding melancholy. Rouse yourself—cast it off! Look on the bright side of things. Let your love for Marguerite have full play. It will discover to you the secret machinations of your enemies. You shall regain by love what you have lost by love. What will not love effect!” and Rosalie paused, and her eyes were moist, for she remembered her parting with her lover.

“You are an able pleader, my dear friend,” said Arthur, persuaded, though not convinced, and looking with admiration at the lovely girl, who had thus been addressing him with unstudied eloquence, “and your cousin François is a fortunate man. Would that I had his lightness of heart, and his happy prospects!”

osalie looked displeased. “You know not what you say, my dear friend,” she said, gravely. “Do you imagine that there are none in the world unhappy, and unfortunate, besides

yourself? François may have more grief, and his days may be darker than your own. I, whom you have considered gay and coquetish, I too have my sorrows." And Rosalie's eyes were filled with tears.

"Forgive me, my dear friend, for my petulance. My selfishness is again rebuked."

"You have made me the confidant of your wrongs and sorrows, and I, weak girl as I am, have ventured to give you some advice, which you, a man, have not scorned. Will you, in your turn, listen to my sorrows? Oh! Captain Conway, I fear for my cousin François; his rashness, his confidence in himself, his very lightness of heart, are so many pitfalls beneath his feet. Oh, my dear friend! I, a devoted follower of our holy religion, which upholds the sacred right of kings—I, the daughter of a Legitimist, love, yes, love with my first and only love, an unbeliever, a Republican, a follower of those cruel bloodthirsty men, who have shed the blood of their King as an oblation to the idol they have set up for their god, Liberty."

"I guessed it," said Arthur, half-speaking to himself.

"And yet you envy our happy prospects," murmured Rosalie. "Even so is the world."

"Can nothing be done to reclaim him?"

"I have tried," she said, mournfully: "I pointed out to him the unholiness of their ways. I appealed to his love. I offered him myself, and all that my father has. I plighted him my troth: and what did he concede to me for this, grudgingly and reluctantly? Why, that as he was bound for a time only, after—mind, after—that time should elapse, he would quit the service of the Republic. Ah, when will that be? Tell me, is there any prospect of peace? We hear so little of what is going on in the world, I may have judged him harshly; peace may be at hand—is it so?"

"Nay, I will not deceive you. I fear, until the Bourbons are reseated on the throne of France, Europe will be disturbed with perpetual strife, which will reach even here across the wide Atlantic."

"There is no prospect of this war ceasing, then. Ah, me ! must that fearful scourge pursue us even to this atom on the surface of the globe ?"

"Are you not aware, Rosalie, that a dangerous, and I fear extensive, conspiracy has already been discovered in this island ? Two of the leaders of it have been already arrested. I heard their names to-day."

"You terrify me dreadfully," said Rosalie, starting, and turning deadly pale.

"No, no, there is nothing to be frightened at, for the present, for it is discovered."

"Captain Conway," she said, slowly, "I perceive your meaning. You suspect that my cousin François (how she persevered in calling him cousin !) is connected with this conspiracy. I fear it myself."

"Yes, from your own words."

"Do not speak in riddles, I beseech you. Let me know the worst."

"He is not one of those arrested ; and I trust he has quitted Dominica. Nay, after all,

it is but suspicion. Yet, did he not say that he knew Marinier and the Carib Chief; and was he not, two days ago, in company with the Master of the 'Sally?' Marinier has been bribing the soldiers. The Carib is doubtful. The Master of the transport has been found in the house of the conspirators. Is there not ground for suspicion?"

"Yet, my dear friend, he is not your enemy. He loves you, and would not wrong you. Did he not say you might repay him fourfold?"

"And, Rosalie, I, too, love him. He may be mistaken and misguided, but he cannot be unworthy, if he loves you, my sweet friend. I already owe him a deep debt of gratitude, and when I can, I will repay him. Has he not shown me myself? Has he not warned me of personal danger? Has he not told me the name of my secret enemy? delicately, it is true, and without compromising his party, as he thought, for who could imagine a Jesuit to be leagued with Republicans?"

Then he began to muse within himself. "Ay,

I must know more. I shall never be content, now, until the whole mystery is laid bare. If I have a secret enemy, he must have a cause for his persecution. I must go back to the beginning. I must get this dear girl to say more. She must tell me what she knows of her lover, François Devrien. Can he be acquainted with my mother's sad story? Old Devrien said his linen was marked De la Motte: by heavens, now the plot thickens! All since the morning of yesterday. A nest of conspirators taken; a mysterious enemy partially revealed; an anonymous letter; a fair, loved girl in danger; her dearest friend in tribulation for her lover, whose very name has kindled strange emotions.

“Rouse yourself, Arthur Conway, you have now some one besides yourself to think of. The apathy of melancholy must vanish. You must reflect, and act. Your honour is at stake. Stumbling-blocks and pitfalls are in your way. Snares are around you. Love lights the dark, mysterious, winding path; follow it to the end,

boldly, but warily ; from this moment there is a new era in your existence ; be resolute, and prosper." At that moment, Arthur forgot Edith, despised himself, was ashamed of his weakness, determined in his own mind to marry Marguerite, to sift to the bottom his uncle's claim to Morley, to leave no stone unturned, to discover his hidden enemy, and vowed that at any cost he would rescue his mother's name from the slur cast upon it.

His intentions, his resolutions, were good ; but had he strength of mind to carry them out ?

Rosalie had perceived the weak spot in his character, but she knew its extent, its fearful depth, no more than he did. She had loved but once, and that love, though a cloud now rested on it, had always been returned. She had not felt, therefore she could not know, the fearful and lasting effects of encouraged, though unrequited, love on a young and ardent temperament. She dreamed that she had infused a new spirit within him which, with his new love

for Marguerite, would for ever efface his gloomy impressions and wayward melancholy. She had been silently watching the workings of his mind, expressed on his handsome and ingenuous countenance: she thought she had succeeded, and for the time she was right.

“Forgive my abstraction, my sweet friend,” he said. “I have been striving to arrange, into some form, this strange turmoil of ideas and circumstances. I have been thinking, Rosalie, of something your kind father told me yesterday: my mind was too preoccupied at the time to follow it up, but now I feel that it may throw some light on a part of my history that I wish much to clear up. Tell me, Rosalie, if it does not offend or wound your feelings, something of him you love. I am aware, already, of three things; that he is not your cousin—that your uncle adopted him, and that the name of De la Motte was on his clothes when found.”

“Nay, you cannot offend me, and I owe you this in return for your confidence; but indeed,

your knowledge of him nearly equals my own."

"Rosalie, in my mother's name, I ask it of you."

"I will tell you all I know, willingly," said Rosalie, "but that is, indeed, little: my uncle François was a merchant at Marseilles, he had a small country-house, not far from Fréjus, in Provence, to which he used often to retire.

"One summer's evening, as he was sitting under the shade of an olive-tree in his little garden, he heard the sound of a horse galloping furiously by; he ran out to see who it was, but he could only just catch a glimpse of a tall man on horseback disappearing amidst the trees; a little way off, on the grass, he saw something like a bundle which the man had probably dropped, for the mark of the horse's hoofs were close alongside it. His curiosity was aroused, and his astonishment was great when he perceived that what he had taken for a bundle was a living being, a warm and breathing though

senseless child, of about three years old. His face was bleeding from a deep cut in the forehead, and his dress was soiled as if he had been rolled in the mud. He was a handsome boy, however, and his clothes were of a superior quality to those worn by peasants. My uncle had a kind, compassionate heart, he pitied the poor, senseless child, and carried it into the house. Round its neck there was a small miniature, set in pearls, of a handsome young man, in the uniform of the Garde Royale; and at the back some braided hair, partly raven black, and partly bright golden colour, like Marguerite's."

"Strange! my mother's hair was of that hue: she was very proud of it," said Arthur, musingly. "Go on, my dear friend."

"There is very little more to tell," replied Rosalie. "François, the child I mean, when questioned as to how he was left in such a state, either could not, or would not, say anything about it: perhaps the blow on his head

had hurt his little brain, and caused him to forget everything that had passed in his infancy; I have spoken to him myself often about it, but he still says that he forgets everything. My uncle, who was a widower, and childless, adopted him as his son, and he has always passed as such, bearing the same name; and when he died he left him all his fortune, appointing my father his guardian. I was sent to a nunnery at Paris to be educated, and François, who had been also sent to the same city for a similar purpose, used to visit me at the convent. Gradually our childish friendship ripened into love. Alas! his wild and ambitious spirit has led him into a dangerous and unholy course. After they slew our sainted King, who is now in heaven," and here Rosalie crossed herself devoutly, "I went to London, and François to the West Indies, as he said, to look after his property, but, in truth, I hope he was disgusted with the *sans culottes*. He visited us several times here, and my father

is still ignorant that he is a Republican. Beyond that fact, and that he is serving with Victor Hugues, I know very little of what he has been doing. Alas! I only know that I still love him." Rosalie could bear it no longer and burst into a flood of tears.

* * * *

Reader, have you ever dreamt? How gloriously do those bright scenes pass before you!

In a few moments a history.

How vivid! how defined! Awake! remember them if you can.

So it was with Arthur. All that he had heard seemed only to perplex and mystify him. He remained the whole of the next day at La Belle Etoile, Marguerite was pronounced a little better. Mr. Gordon took up his abode there also, and Arthur found favour in his sight. He returned to Roseau, and learnt the whole detail of the arrest of the conspirators.

Marguerite slowly recovered from her dan-

gerous illness, and Rosalie kept her promise, as soon as her adopted sister could bear it: she told her Arthur's history. She wept over it, and sympathized in his woes, and her love for him increased.

He came and declared his love: she threw herself on his neck and wept for joy.

Still neither she nor her uncle left La Belle Etoile. And Arthur went there day by day, sometimes even staying for nearly a week together.

Jack Diver remained in the hospital at the Morne for a long time, hovering between life and death, and was regarded as a prisoner until he could clear himself.

The 'Sally' sailed without him.

Our hero sought everywhere for Marinier, but he could not find him. The mule was traced to its owner, but he disclaimed all knowledge of who had hired it.

Amos Jones was arrested, and lost his business. The Carib Chief was invisible, though a

strange figure had been seen by the sentries several times, hovering about the hospital.

Rosalie was sad, for François did not write. She, however, received one short note from him two days after his departure, saying that he had arrived safely at Guadaloupe.

The note was thrust under the door, and no one knew who brought it.

The example made of the two Frenchmen, it was supposed, had smothered the conspiracy, for no more tampering with the soldiers took place, and, although spies were out in the town, nothing fresh could be ascertained.

The British settlers, merchants, and store-keepers, however, were organized into a respectable militia force, and every precaution was taken to prevent surprise.

There was a lull, a deadly stillness, treacherous as that which precedes the veering of the hurricane.

* * * *

During the next three months, Marinier was

not idle. The Middle Ground, as the plantation of young Pierrot was called, was the scene of his operations. He became a regular pensioner on the house, and rarely stirred out beyond the precincts of the plantation. During that time, however, he contrived to gain a great ascendancy over its inmates, and, through the medium of Pierrot's grandson, whom nobody could suspect, he quickly ascertained that his letter to Marguerite had failed. How he could not tell. But as Arthur Conway visited La Belle Etoile day after day, and Miss Gordon was still there, both which facts his spies soon found out, it was evident that the letter must have either miscarried, or that its effects had not been such as he wished. He resolved to change his plan. At the festival of Les Roses and Les Marguerites, he had mingled with the crowd of negroes, in disguise, that he might judge of the feelings of that race against their masters, and there he once more encountered the mulatto, Lemantin. A letter which he wrote to England, probably about the

middle of May, though there is no date to it, has been preserved in the manuscript, and it will best explain his proceedings about, and up to that period.

It is directed to the "Marquis de Charolles, Post-office, Plymouth," and is written in French, in a very peculiar style.

"Monsieur,

"According to your instructions, I have endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to carry out your intentions with regard to the young man. Hitherto, through some mysterious and unaccountable influences, my efforts have been frustrated. The tools I have used have either been blunted or broken. The money that I ventured on red cloth has been thrown away. The traders are arrested, and the buyers hold the goods.

"The speculation in the French article that I wrote to you about was a mistake, for I could excite no jealousy or competition; the market was already occupied. Even from the man I

reckoned upon, I can get no information as to the disposal of the goods, for he is sick, and confined to his bed. As you advised, I tried the effect of a letter to spoil the market, but that, too, has completely failed. Still, there has been no risk, and, although the stock is still on hand, the venture, I trust, is still secret. I have gained over the people I am living with to my views, and I have already acquired a powerful assistant, with whose aid I cannot fail. A good watch is kept, and a new plan for disposing of the goods has been already made. It may be some months before the issue is known, though I can venture to prophesy its entire success. But money is wanted to carry it out. I shall, therefore, draw on the Baronet for five hundred dollars, which I trust he will honour. This for your ear. You desire to hear some of the news stirring in the West Indies. The crops promise well. There has been an earthquake, which has done some damage, but only in certain localities. It is rumoured that Victor Hugues is making great preparations for attacking the different

islands held by the British ; he is uncommonly active, and, since Guadaloupe has been re-taken, has become a very dangerous neighbour. We may expect to hear of him here during the summer. Two French settlers have been hanged for bribing the soldiers, and shooting one of the guard. There is very little more to tell you, except a bit of island gossip. The officer commanding the British troops—his name, I think, is Captain Conway—is to be married very shortly to a very pretty girl, a Miss Gordon, who will have a considerable fortune. Scandal, however, says that he is only trifling with her affections, which is sometimes exaggerated into a case of deliberate seduction. . . .”

The rest had been torn off, probably to prevent it from being read by the person for whose eyes the latter part was meant.

The long, eventful day has closed ; the curtain of night has fallen upon the stage ; before it is raised again, we must close this chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THREE months have rolled away—it is difficult to retrace our steps—therefore in the last chapter we briefly narrated the events of that period before opening upon fresh and exciting scenes. The curtain is raised again. The Middle Ground appears on the stage glowing in a July sun.

On a bench in the shade of a lofty hedge of Barbadoes pride, where the flame-breasted humming-birds were busily darting to and fro and buzzing merrily round the orange-striped flowers, sat two men of remarkable appearance.

One was low in stature, thin, pale and intellectual, with sharp features and quick, expressive eyes. The other was man as an animal, tall, robust, with limbs not unsymmetrically made, but of almost gigantic proportions. His round bullet-shaped head was covered with short, curly black hair. The upper part of his face was good, and his large round black eyes were almost soft; but the jaws and mouth were immense, with a fearful expression of gross sensuality, which was heightened by a short black beard on his chin, and a fringe of the same coloured hair on his upper lip.

The whitey-brown colour of his skin, his huge under-jaw and bull-neck, showed his alliance with the negro race, although his figure was cast in a mould that would have served a statuary for the model of a gladiator.

These two were the Jesuit, Marinier; and the mulatto, Lemantin.

Crouching down, or rather crawling like a worm, upon the earth behind the hedge, amidst

the matted weeds, was a dusky figure. Lying before him, on a huge dock-leaf within reach of his hand, was a short light bow, ready strung, and with an arrow fitted to it. He lay perfectly still, and scarcely seemed to breathe. There was but little air stirring, and although the two seated on the bench were conversing in a low tone, their voices were audible at some distance. Yet so stealthily had the crouching form drawn near, that they had not heard his approach.

“The boy has not passed, brother, on his way back—the path has been watched carefully,” said the tall mulatto.

“All the better—all the better; if he remains there but two days longer his disgrace is certain.”

The mulatto grinned horribly and said, laughingly:

“What a droll fellow you are, citoyen: why not say his death at once?”

“I have told you repeatedly, Lemantin, that I do not want him killed—that is, just at pre-

sent. No, this is what I wish, understand me well. In two days from this the Republican troops land at Rocroix from Marie Galante, of this I have certain information; but the boy knows nothing. They will gain a footing on the island, and will be joined by you know whom; by-and-by the regulars and militia will gain information of this, and will march to meet the French Republicans. But the boy must not know of it in time to be at their head—they will send messengers to him, but the messengers must not arrive at their destination. If he remains at La Belle Etoile good, something will happen; but should he leave it of his own accord to return to Morne Bruce, he must be prevented. Do you understand me now?"

"Yes," briefly responded the mulatto.

"Are you quite sure he has not passed?"

"There is but one path, and there are five men on the look out, they will obey my orders, drunken hogs as they are."

“ He rides with pistols, and is brave enough. Are they armed ? ”

“ Yes ; to the teeth.”

“ Now, Lemantin, you love the creole, Rosalie, she is your ; but the fair-haired English girl, Margaret Gordon, must be mine to do as I please with—will you guarantee this ? ”

“ What do you want with her ? ” exclaimed the mulatto, surveying with inexpressible contempt the wizened shrivelled little man by his side.

“ For a wife, to be sure.”

“ Now you are joking with me.”

“ Not at all—and we must have a witness to the ceremony, one who would like to be the principal actor in it.”

“ You speak in riddles, brother.”

“ I did not mean to do so. We will carry the three up into the mountains. You will wed your Rosalie. I, or some one else, will wed Margaret Gordon. We, that is, you, or I, or some one else, will have the marriage solemnized

in his presence. He must witness the ceremony. When that is done, we will not kill him—no, that would be too merciful—but we will give him up as a prisoner to the tender-hearted Victor Hugues. Should he escape, he will be tried by a court-martial and disgraced: if not, he will perish miserably in a dungeon at Guadaloupe.”

“Ha! it is a good plan, I have no doubt, though I don’t understand why you are so eager about it; but there is one thing you have forgotten brother. What is to be done with that cursed Le Blanc? he will be looking for his mistress.”

Marinier bit his lips; he had thought of this, but had trusted to the mulatto’s want of foresight.

“He is rash, and may be killed. Even if not, why should you care? Are you not his equal, nay, are you not in many respects his superior? Look at that figure formed to command; those limbs with the strength and power of a giant;

rise, throw off the yoke. You are strong enough : let not the Frenchman thwart you in your love."

As he said this, Marinier cast an admiring glance on the huge frame of the mulatto. The giant arose, and stretching his figure to its full height, he threw himself into a posture of defiance, at the same time regarding his muscular limbs with evident complacency, and holding out his brawny hand to Marinier, he said: "You are right, brother, and I thank you; your words have fanned into a blaze what has been long smothered in my heart. It has burnt and burnt for years, but has never blazed forth before this."

"You care no longer then for Le Blanc, and will do what I wish?" said the Jesuit, insinuatingly.

"From henceforth, I care for no man. You whites, curses on you, seek to rule the whole world, tyrants and oppressors as you are, and the drunken negro hogs tamely submit to the

lash. Here, at least, the coloured men shall not, if Lemantin can kindle a kindred spirit in their breasts. They shall lead, the Caribs and negroes will follow; then neither French republican nor English aristocrat shall breathe the air of this beautiful island but on sufferance."

"And have you never thought of this before?" inquired Marinier, surprised and amused for the moment at this sudden outbreak of passion in the gigantic mulatto.

"Never but in my dreams; I, though not a slave, have tamely yielded to the insulting superiority of the white man. Now it is different. You have opened my eyes—I see. Rosalie the aristocrat shall be mine. I will rival Le Blanc, and if he stands in my way—woe unto him. The fair-haired girl is yours—it is a bargain," and he grasped the small, thin, bony hand of Marinier in his.

"This is as it should be, Lemantin. You will want money to keep your followers in pay, nothing can be done without it, I will supply

you with some in return for this. How many can you muster for the attack on *La Belle Etoile*?"

"Enough to settle accounts with the base aristocrat Devrien and his fawning slaves," replied the mulatto, haughtily. "There is but one man I should like to associate with me in this business, and that is the Carib Chief—the Captain Baron as he is called—if I could but find him. He knows the country better than I do."

At the mention of the Carib Chief, the crouching form slowly raised his head, and stretching gently forth his hand with an even gliding motion, seized the bow noiselessly, as if a sudden instinct had warned him of danger.

"Do not seek him," replied Marinier, impressively. "I tell you that man is dangerous—dangerous to me, to you, to all of us. I warn you as I warned *Le Blanc* of it. What on earth took him to the waterfall—to watch and spy, and to tell all to his friend, the boy. Did

he take the oath? no, why was he then at La Maison Vide? a spy! I tell you he is a spy of the red-coats. And after him, what think you of your favoured rival, Le Blanc, is he to be trusted? What made him bring that John Bull sailor to the meeting? why is he a friend of the Carib? why would he not listen to what I said? why did he write that note to the boy? trust them not, Lemantin; get rid of them when you can—how you can.”

While the Jesuit for his own purposes was thus insinuating suspicion into the mind of the mulatto, the dusky figure concealed amongst the weeds, as if it had heard enough, began slowly to writhe itself away inch by inch, still keeping its head towards the hedge, holding the bow in one hand with the arrow fitted to the string, a slight rustling and shaking of the leaves alone marking its progress. When the figure had moved about ten yards in this painful position, it sprang suddenly and silently on its feet, and displayed the supple and graceful

form of the Captain Baron. Fortunate it was for those who sat on the bench that they had not perceived his retreat, for the death of one, if not of both, would probably have been the result. Even as it was the Carib drew the arrow to its head, and pointed to the spot where they were sitting, while a fierce and yet scornful expression passed over his features ; but with a motion of supreme contempt he lowered the bow, turning the point of the arrow to the ground, and gradually relaxed the string—then giving a shrill scream like that of a wounded hawk, he sprang amidst the rocks and bushes and disappeared. Startled by the cry, which, echoing from crag to crag, from rock to rock, reverberated on all sides, Marinier and the mulatto jumped up from the bench, and stared wildly around. From the broken nature of the ground it was impossible to tell exactly from whence the sound proceeded—they listened, it was not repeated.

“ It is a signal, no doubt, from some of the

men on the look-out," at length said the Jesuit. "The boy is coming. Hold firm, Lemantin; but do not injure him."

The mulatto, bursting through the fence, hastened down the ravine, nearly in the same direction taken by the Carib; and, scrambling over the cliff, in a few minutes reached the spot where the five negroes were concealed, guarding the narrow pass near the sea.

Marinier quietly reseated himself on the bench, but there was a nervous twitching of the muscles of his countenance, as he listened intently for the sound of fire-arms. He cared little who suffered, if his end was attained. The plot was well laid, and could scarcely fail; yet, knowing the superiority of the white man over the negro, both in skill and courage, he could not help feeling some anxiety as to the result. He waited some time, but neither Lemantin nor his prisoner appeared.

The mulatto reached the ambuscade, which was planted where a broken cliff came nearly

down to the black rocks that studded the beach. A narrow track, just wide enough for a single horse to pass, wound amidst them here, passing immediately under the face of the cliff so close, that the rider's head touched the twining, twisting roots and branches of the tamarisks, that clothed its side; and again bending downwards towards the uncouth rocks, amidst which it seemed to lose itself.

“ *Qui vive ?* ” shouted a voice from behind a low wall of rock near the sea.

“ *Egalité pour tous !* ” replied the mulatto ;
“ is all right, Antoine ? ”

“ *Person n’a passé, mon maitre,* ” said a tall negro, in broken French, with a long rusty gun in his bony fist ; “ an *agouti* rustled through the bushes above just now, but nothing else has stirred.”

“ Did you not hear a hawk scream ? ”

“ We did, but supposed it was a warning from you.”

“ What could it have been ? ” muttered the

mulatto. Then aloud: "Keep a good look-out, all of you. Fifty dollars, if you take him alive."

The negroes grinned horribly. Throughout the world it would have been difficult to find five such ferocious-looking ruffians. Hideousness, gross sensuality, debauchery, cruelty, all the evil hyena-like attributes of man, without one redeeming quality, were pourtrayed in that armed group of nearly naked negroes.

The mulatto, satisfied that his expected prey had not escaped, and that his followers kept a good look-out, retraced his steps towards the place where he expected to find Marinier.

As Lemantin, after climbing over the cliff, was crossing a small open glade, a shadowy figure, coming suddenly from behind the stump of a hard-wood tree, placed itself directly in his path, without, however, showing any decided tokens of hostility. The mulatto was startled, for he was provided with no offensive weapons,

except a long knife, and he quickly perceived that the man before him had a bow, ready strung, and an arrow fitted to it, in his hand, although he held the point towards the ground. For a minute they remained face to face, looking at each other.

“The mulatto, Lemantin, seeks the Carib Chief. He is here,” said Le Baron, in a tone where contempt was not concealed.

“It was you, then, who gave the cry just now?”

“It is the signal of Le Baron, when he wishes to be found. What wants the mulatto of the Carib? It is peace between them.”

“Not only peace, Le Baron, but if you will join us, it shall be perpetual alliance. But how came you to know that I wanted to speak to you?”

“The Carib’s ears are long—sounds are borne to him from afar.”

“Nay, some one must have told you.”

“Marinier,” briefly responded the Chief.

“Ha! that plotting, planning devil. Why, only a few minutes ago, he was warning me against you—trying to set us against each other, when it should be perpetual friendship between us. Le Baron, see the cursed cunning of the white man. These Frenchmen want us to help them to take this island from the red-coated aristocrats, and promise us equal rights, ‘liberty and equality.’ Bah! when once they have conquered, they will keep everything for themselves; we shall still be like worms, trodden under their feet. Shall we let these things be? Shall not this beautiful island be for us, not them? What says the Captain Baron?”

While Lemantin was thus speaking, the Carib did not attempt to interrupt him, but the expression of scorn on his features grew deeper and deeper. When thus appealed to, he opened his lips, and said:

“Le Baron wishes to hear more: let the mulatto speak on.”

Lemantin warmed with his subject, for, although an uneducated man, and of a fierce and cruel spirit, yet he was possessed of a latent energy and ambition, which, had it been cultivated and properly directed, might have raised him from that state of degradation which his fierce passions and brutal sensuality had hitherto subjected him.

“Yes, Chief,” continued he, raising his voice, and speaking with much animation, although it must be understood that we are translating his words, for he spoke in the *lingua Franca*, “yes! there are thousands of beings in this island, and the adjacent ones, pining for real liberty. I know it, for now I feel it in my inmost heart. Why should the white men oppress us—grind us under their heels? Are we not flesh and blood like they? Let us rise, and throw off the yoke! let us meet cunning with cunning, force with force! We have felt their galling chains, and their cruel lash. We will repay them with death! Yes, the white

men shall die ; but, before they die, they shall be made to feel what coloured men have felt, deep, bitter, degrading agony, and their women shall live—live for us, to rear our children until we tire of them ; when they grow old they shall become our slaves. The mulattoes, the Caribs, and the negroes shall form one family of brethren ; the Frenchmen shall drive away the English, they in their turn shall perish. Will the Chief join the enterprise ?”

Le Baron waited patiently until Lemantin had ceased : then, speaking slowly and deliberately, he said :

“ The mulatto has spoken, now listen to the Carib Chief. The Caribs were a powerful people on the mainland, they lived where the scarlet bird stalked amidst the lagoons, where the mighty river drove back the waves of the sea, and the orange bird perched on the dark rocks amidst the everlasting forests far, far away into the land. They were a mighty nation then ; but Manitou frowned, the Arcovagi

came and drove them into the sea ; their piraguas floated on the waves ; they sought a new home, they found it. In these beautiful islands there were then neither hurricanes nor earthquakes ; the Caribs lived happily, they had many slaves. The white men came over the sea in their winged ships ; then the wind blew, and the earth shook. They were a mighty people who could withstand their thunder. Yet the Carib was still free. He was never a slave like the drunken negro, and the fawning mulatto.”

“What mean you ?” interrupted Lemantin, furiously, “is it not bad enough to be ridden rough-shod over by the cursed whites, but shall a paltry Carib insult us ?”

“The negroes and the mulattoes are hogs,” said the Chief, contemptuously : “a Carib may hate the whites, but he spits upon the blacks.”

“Hell and the devil !” almost screamed the mulatto, drawing his knife, “but you shall pay for this.”

The Carib retreated a few paces, and putting his hand to his mouth, screamed like a hawk.

In a moment, two men, dressed and armed like the Chief, sprang, as it were, out of the ground, on each side of the mulatto, throwing off the mask of leaves and bushes under which they had been so closely concealed, that none but a Carib's eye could have detected them; and throwing themselves suddenly on the mulatto, they brought him at once, powerful as he was, to the ground, binding his limbs at the same time in a powerful manner with lithes of wild vine; and as he attempted to cry out, they gagged him with a piece of hard wood which they forced between his teeth and fastened securely behind his head.

The Baron looked calmly on without the slightest sign of approbation, but when the two Caribs let go their hold of the mulatto, and he saw him lying bound and helpless, he drew an arrow from his quiver, and sticking it upright in the ground, he pointed to the shadow, and

spoke a few words in his soft native tongue, and then abruptly took his departure.

The two Caribs sat down, and, laying their bows, with their arrows ready, across their knees, watched the mulatto in silence.

CHAPTER VII.

ON the same spot, beneath the same old mangrove-tree, where the lovely creole and her republican lover had so nearly quarrelled, perfectly unconscious of any immediate danger, and, indeed, of everything in the wide world, save of what he held encircled with his arm, sat Arthur Conway. Marguerite's head was pillowed on his bosom, and her soft, blue eyes were upturned towards his, with the expression of a saint gazing upon some holy thing. Lost in one of those delicious dreamy trances of

love, those moments few and rare of true and exquisite joy upon earth, their lips moved not, but their eyes and their hearts interchanged communion—silent, but oh, how speaking! Yet between these two what a contrast. His was but the momentary delirious intoxication of passion, and an unreal evanescent feeling of love, the effect of habitual self-deception. Entranced, fascinated, flying from himself, he thought, and at times persuaded his conscience, that he was devotedly, truly, attached to Marguerite, and in her presence, with his arm round her waist, with her warm, sweet breath on his cheek, with her fair, clustering ringlets falling lightly all around, with those soft, blue eyes beaming love—heavenly love—smiling, and innocent, and trusting upon him! this might be wholly true, but in the silence, the thoughtfulness of the sleepless nights, Edith!—Edith the jilt!—Edith the coquette! Edith the mercenary!—still Edith!—ever, ever Edith!

Yet thither he had gone, day after day ; lured there—dragged there by some irresistible attraction. It would be difficult to analyse his feelings exactly, so strangely were mingled together wounded pride, revenge, and love. Not that he was consciously playing Marguerite false ; for the time, at least, he was sincere. No, he was deceiving himself. Had any one hinted that he did not love her, he would have told that man it was a lie. But a sigh, a smile, and word from Edith, would have dissipated the whole fabric of his love, as the swollen, pent-up river, bursting suddenly through the heaped-up barrier of densely jammed ice sweeps away, with resistless power, everything that impedes or checks its headlong course. But Marguerite's love for Arthur was pure and undivided. The first yearning of a romantic, ingenuous heart is to love, and be beloved ; when that love is once avowed, there is no mistrust—no suspicion ; the belief is perfect—the abandonment complete. Woe unto that man who trifles with a young

maiden's first, artless love ! The very simplicity of it is so pure—so beautiful, that it ought for ever to be held sacred. Is it so ? Alas, alas ! how many wasted forms—how many broken hearts ! the drooping lily, and the cankered rosebud, tell the sad tale of woman's love, and man's depravity !

Marguerite was a child of nature. Her love was an idolatry—her faith in him was perfect. She had seen no one to compare with her Arthur—neglected, unloved for years, save by her fond old uncle, this to her was a new existence, full of sunshine as yet unobscured save by one passing cloud. O, how supremely happy she was as she reclined there on Arthur's bosom, listening greedily to words that sounded in her ears like an angel's voice, bearing tidings of heavenly love. Her face was suffused with a glow of seraphic pleasure, and gradually her eyes sank upon the ground, and her lids were half closed as if she could scarcely bear the bright gleams that passed from his. Suddenly

Marguerite uttered a faint scream, she had seen the shadow of a man moving over the smooth sward.

Arthur started up and drew a pistol from his breast, a man was standing with his back to the sun looking at them placidly. Arthur Conway for a moment did not recognise the figure before him, but cocking his pistol he presented it at the Chief.

The Carib held out both his hands to show that they were empty, but in other respects remained imperturbable.

"It is the Carib Chief, dear Marguerite," whispered Arthur, lowering his pistol at the same time. "Come, my sweet one, let us receive him kindly, although he has broken our dream of love."

Marguerite, taking Arthur's hand, approached the Carib with a winning smile on her ruby lips, and, with honeyed words, thanked him for his assistance at the perilous scene which had

caused her so many hours of suffering, and so many moments of delicious rapture.

The Carib bowed his head and veiled his eyes with his hand, as if the resplendent beauty of her charms were more than they could bear, but he did not speak.

Arthur, too, held out his hand to the Carib, and bade him kindly welcome in the hyperbolic language he had found best understood by the chief; but he neither moved nor uttered a word. Yet, in all this, there was no ungainliness, no awkwardness of manner; it was pure unsophisticated nature,—his nature.

Arthur had noticed the Carib's taciturnity at the waterfall when others were present; it was evident enough that the chief had something of importance to communicate, or he would not have sought him, so he whispered to Marguerite his desire to be left alone for a short time. To her, his wish was as a command, and no sooner had she gone, than the Carib's manner

changed immediately ; taking Arthur's yet extended hand, he raised it to his lips, and still holding it, and letting his full, soft, black eyes wander over the young soldier's graceful figure, he said, in his broken, though musical language, which we will translate.

"The maiden is fair as the flower of the orange-tree, her words are like the humming of the wings of the flame-breasted bird, her hair is as the fresh sulphur on the mountain top, she shrinks from man as the creeping plant in the Savannah. The English Captain is a happy man."

"The Chief is very good," replied Arthur, pleased by the Carib's words. "What can the English Captain do for Le Baron?"

"Le Baron has come to redeem his promise," replied the Chief. "In two suns the white ants come to Ricroix, the red ant Chief must no longer bask in the light of the maiden's eyes if he is brave and would remain a Chief."

"Is the Chief well-assured of this?" asked Arthur, hesitatingly.

“A Carib never lies to his friend,” replied Le Baron, haughtily.

Our hero mused for a moment. The Carib’s words, few as they were, had recalled suddenly to his mind the embittering truth, that he had been, and was neglecting his duty.

It was a cruel pang to part with Marguerite, and to her it would be doubly cruel. Yet it were better for both that he should now no longer delay, for should she discover his negligence, she would blame herself as the cause, and her happiness would be destroyed perhaps for ever. Then, once again, like a sickly gleam of pale blue lightning, there flashed across his brain a faint flickering consciousness of that terrible day-dream, forgotten for weeks, banished by Marguerite’s confiding love, now only to be smothered by resolution. It was taken promptly, although there was a struggle, for his voice was hoarse, and his cheeks were pale as he said :

“The English Captain will have his horse

saddled and will ride into Roseau directly :—
will the Chief go with him ?”

“ The English Captain is brave,” replied the Carib, “ and Le Baron loves him, he does not wish to see him die.”

“ There is no danger in the path to Roseau ;
the Captain is well armed,” replied Arthur.

“ The maiden must not lose her Chief, the black ants beset the narrow path, their guns are long, their Chief is cruel. Will the red ant trust the wasp, if so, he may laugh at the black ants. It is well.”

Arthur laid his hand on the Carib’s shoulder and said :

“ What means Le Baron ? do the negroes dare to rise in arms against the English, does the Chief know by whom they are led ?”

The Carib replied, by one word, slowly pronounced, “ *Marinier*.”

The name startled Arthur. It was the same Tom Ellam had told him of as seducing the soldiers with money, and inquiring about him in

a suspicious manner. This was the name of the man who answered the description of the one seen by the gamekeeper at Morley. This was he who had written the anonymous letter, and now here he was, heading an ambuscade of blacks, according to the Carib's account, to waylay if not to kill him. What could this man's motives be? What his object? He was not conscious of having injured or offended any man—why should they seek his capture or his death? If Marinier had so recently followed him from England, he could scarcely be joined, heart and hand, with the republican party. For the second time a consciousness glimmered on his mind, that this man's hatred, or whatever motive was urging him on, must be personal: he had forgotten much in Marguerite's love. If the Carib's story were true, and he saw no reason to doubt it, his situation was indeed critical. There was but one narrow horse-track leading into Roseau, and this was now beset by armed men, placed there by some

unknown enemy, for the purpose of waylaying, if not of killing him. The French were to land in two days at Rocroix, it would take nearly that time to march there. The Carib had promised to guide him. At any sacrifice, he must be at the head of his little force. There was something mysterious about the Carib, which he could not quite understand, but it would be fool-hardy to neglect his warning, and wrong not to proffer by his offer of assistance; besides the artless praises of his mistress, almost poetically spoken by the Carib, still sounded sweetly in his ears. He would put himself under his guidance.

While our hero was making up his mind, the Carib stood silently watching him, and when Arthur expressed his readiness to trust to him, he showed no symptoms of satisfaction, but said merely, "It is well," then taking an arrow from his quiver, he stuck its point in the smooth sword, and said,

"When the shadow falls on the other side, Le Baron will call the English Captain."

Arthur quickly perceived the delicacy of the native's words and action, and wringing his hand, he hastened from him into the house. The chief threw himself at full length in the shade of the mangrove tree, and watched the arrow.

We will not attempt to narrate Arthur's parting with Marguerite. It was the first pang she had felt since he had declared his love to her; but to all appearance she was cheerful and resigned. He stated to her the absolute necessity of his presence at Morne Bruce, and did not attempt to conceal the probability of an encounter with the French republicans. She did not weep or faint, but told him that she would pray for him day and night: his was a holy cause, and God would assist him. Though she bade him go and prosper, yet twining her arms round him she seemed to wish him to stay. Then one long lingering kiss, and they parted. Rosalie, too, her coquetry subdued by the dread of losing her republican lover, embraced him tenderly, and prayed him, for her

sake, to be merciful to the republicans. Old Devrien, too, shook him warmly by the hand, and the slaves, headed by Pompey, gathered round him, and vied with each other in demonstrations of respect as he left the house of La Belle Etoile.

As soon as he had quitted it, poor Marguerite's resolution failed her, and she fell fainting into Rosalie's arms.

And now for some time we must leave La Belle Etoile to follow the fortunes of Arthur Conway, and the Carib, through some strange scenes.

When Arthur went back to the old mangrove tree, the Carib was still lying on the grass watching the arrow, but when he saw our hero approaching he sprang nimbly on his feet, and drew it out of the ground.

"The English chief has not delayed, it is well," said the Carib. Then leading the way he took precisely the same track which Le Blanc and the Master of the transport had used on

the day of the oath, only in the opposite direction. Arthur Conway followed silent and abstracted, and trusting entirely to the Carib.

Near La Maison Vide the Carib, suddenly putting his hand to his mouth, uttered the shrill hawk-like cry, startling Arthur from his reverie. The cry was returned from a thicket of stunted mangroves, and a figure dressed and armed like the chief, but lower in stature, and adorned with duller feathers, glided from it.

The chief addressed him in a few words of their soft language, which were of course incomprehensible to our hero.

"It is well," said Le Baron, "La Perouse says the cotton tree is ready."

They had reached a sparkling stream, partially overshadowed by the mangroves, and from amidst a densely growing mass of luxuriant weeds, the two natives lifted a long light canoe, and launched it on the water.

Le Baron got in first, and motioned to the young officer to creep in, and lie at full length

in the bottom of the canoe. He complied, and La Perouse, gathering a few palmetto and fern leaves, covered him up. Then launching the canoe fairly into the river, he crept cautiously in himself.

One stroke of the paddle, and the head of the light piragua was pointing down the stream. The Chief strung his bow, and laid his quiver of arrows across his knees, and his example was followed by La Perouse. Seeing this, Arthur drew his pistols from his breast, and carefully examined the priming. With rapid, yet almost noiseless strokes of their paddles, the two Indians urged the piragua swiftly down the now dull Lethein stream, while their bright keen eyes wandered here and there amidst the tangled mangroves, and every faculty seemed at its utmost stretch. Nothing, however stirred, but a lazy iguana, or a solitary dipper, and no sound, save the gentle splash of the paddle in the black sluggish stream, disturbed the grim silence of the lonely spot. Presently emerging

from the dim, sombre shade of the matted mangrove branches, the canoe shot suddenly into the bright sunlight of the glowing sea.

They had glided on smoothly, but rapidly, for nearly two miles towards the south, when for a moment the Carib ceased paddling, and in a low voice told Arthur to look towards the land. Raising his head over the gunwale of the canoe, he perceived that they were about a quarter of a mile from the narrow sandy beach. Above were scattered rocks, amidst which wound the narrow horse track, and then rose a broken cliff, furrowed with water courses, and clothed to the summit with fantastic shrubs.

"Does the English Captain see nothing?" said the Carib in a soft whisper.

"He sees nothing but water, rocks, and trees," replied Arthur.

"Look!" said Le Baron, and putting his hand to his mouth, he gave again the sham hawk-like scream.

Suddenly, from the shadow of the rocks,

sprang up several dark figures, their gun-barrels gleaming in the sunlight.

There was evidently confusion among them, for they all huddled together like a flock of sheep. When from the side of the cliff, emerging from the tamarisks, a single figure could be seen scrambling nimbly down; in a moment he was with the groups of negroes, and they could see him with an impatient gesture pointing towards the canoe.

“The mulatto, Lemantin,” said the Carib in a scornful tone; then motioning to La Perouse to do the same, he applied himself vigorously to his paddle.

Two or three bullets whizzed through the air, or splashed into the water, but they were too far off for the firing to have any effect, beyond that of convincing Arthur of the fidelity of the Captain Baron.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHITE vaporous clouds were wreathed in fantastic shapes round the mountain tops, descending and mingling amidst the massive forests with the curling fog-banks. The air was damp and chilly. The reeking earth, and the teeming wilderness of castor-oil plants, diffused through the atmosphere a sickly nauseating odour. A gleaming, feeble, halo-circled moon, and here and there a pale star peeping faintly through the mist, telling that night had not yet passed away, shed a dubious light on the plateau of Morne Bruce ; yet, bugles were

sounding, drums were beating, and armed figures were moving busily to and fro. Some there were falling into their ranks noiselessly and steadily, accustomed to discipline, and obedient to the word of command, though occasionally a passing oath, or a rough jest, at the appearance of the others, might be heard amongst them.

The second party were mostly clad in white jackets and trowsers, with belts of all sizes and patterns slung carelessly across their bodies, while their arms, not piled, but leaning against the walls, or lying carelessly on the ground, were of various forms and sizes.

There was, however, an air of cheerfulness and determination in their countenances, showing that the work before them was not repugnant to their feelings, and their active muscular bodies and bronzed complexion proclaimed them formidable foes.

Many of the militia were attended by negro slaves, to carry their firelocks, and the small

supply of food they were enabled to take with them.

There was one group of about fifty warriors standing and lying about in every variety of attitude, that attracted universal attention. Some few had ships' muskets or rifles, but far the greater proportion were armed with nothing but a light short bow, and a shark-skin quiver, filled with small copper-headed arrows. Some had a short axe in their belts, others a naked knife, and about a dozen carried in their hands a knotted club of hard wood.

All wore nearly the same dress, if dress it could be called—a circle, or coronet, of bright coloured feathers, from the paroquet and macaw, surrounded their heads: on the crowns, their sleek, well-combed black hair was twisted and tied into a knot, through which was thrust a large fish-bone, or a piece of polished copper. Round their waists was a belt, sustaining a short tunic, open at the hips, all covered with the plumage of birds. Some had bracelets of cop-

per, others strings of coral, round their arms; ear-rings of tortoise-shell, amber, or copper: one or two had their noses and under lips pierced with small pieces of the same materials, to which gold and silver were occasionally added. Some had strings of a red seed round their legs, and from the necks of a few of them hung a gorget of highly-polished copper, by a string, on which were threaded seeds and pieces of coral, mixed with metals.

The parts of their bodies exposed to the sun were anointed with some oily preparation, of a rusty red colour.

They did not mix with the white men, but remained apart, preserving a dignified silence; though they evidently watched the movements of the regular soldiers with great curiosity.

When the bugle sounded for the men to fall in, they all sprang on their legs, and imitating the soldiers as well as they could, they formed themselves, without any apparent leader, into a company.

Ammunition was served out by a sergeant to such as had muskets, which they received in perfect silence, and stuck the cartridges into their quivers.

There was little military parade. No music struck up with enlivening sound to cheer them on the march, but there were in that small and motley force, brave hearts that wanted it not.

There were but three regular officers, whose names it is not necessary to mention. One was appointed to form an advanced guard, consisting of twenty Caribs, and a few regulars. Then came the main-body, under another officer, consisting of the whole of the militia, with eighty men of Arthur's regiment: and the rear-guard was composed of the rest of the Caribs, with a sergeant's party of the regulars. Arthur himself had not as yet appeared.

An orderly arrives on the parade, a word of command is given, and the little force moves off from the Morne, down the zigzag road, in the order given above, La Perouse heading the whole, as a guide.

Three horses, duly accoutered, with holsters at their saddle-bows, are held by three armed Caribs, in front of Arthur's quarters. Inside are three men, Dallas, Arthur, and the Master of the transport. Three cups of fragrant chocolate are standing steaming on the table, but they are untasted. In the verandah, quietly smoking his pipe, under the trailing creepers, the Captain Baron is calmly waiting.

Our hero is in a determined, and not altogether placable frame of mind. Dallas is as usual, cool and collected. The Master of the transport exhibits, in his countenance, a fearful picture of passion, hatred, fear, and perplexity.

In the rear of the house, two black men are carrying something on a litter slowly and laboriously—there is a linen cloth thrown over it. Tom Ellam is walking close to it—he has a paper in his hand soiled and crumpled; he is trying to make out the direction.

“ There is no time to deliberate, Sir, on what is proper or improper; either you go with us,

and by so doing prove your loyalty, or you will be tried by a court-martial—I give you the choice.”

These words were addressed by Arthur to the master of the transport, in a decisive and somewhat imperious tone.

“ It’s only a ride, Captain, and it will do you good,” said Dallas, quietly ; “ you have a tendency of blood to the head, and the exercise will stop it.”

“ I have not much time to give you, Captain Diver,” said Arthur impatiently, taking out his watch. “ There is a horse outside ready saddled for you, and there is a guard-room occupied by militia—they at least will take care of you, and should anything happen to us, it will exasperate them, and you will be either hanged or shot ; whilst you are with me you only run the risk of a bullet from the French ; once that my back is turned, I cannot answer for your life. I give you five minutes to make up your mind.”

Jack Diver remained sulky and silent. Dallas began to sip his chocolate, looking up occasion-

ally at the master of the transport. The young officer went to the door and called out :

“ Come in, Le Baron, and take a glass of eau de vie before we start.”

The Carib Chief entered at the call, and his dark meaning eye glanced like a spark of fire as it fell upon the master of the transport. Jack Diver felt an unaccountable thrill of fear steal over his frame when he beheld this man stalk into the room with noiseless step. He almost screamed, for there could be now no doubt that his presence at La Maison Vide was known. In the twinkling of an eye all his stubbornness vanished. The singular appearance of the Carib Chief, dressed precisely as he had been at the taking of the fatal oath, could not be mistaken. A deadly fear came upon him, for he now at once recognised the man he had wished to flog on the deck of the ‘Sally’—everything in a moment flashed before his eyes with a fearful reality. One word from the Carib Chief and his fate was sealed—death ! ignominious death !

There was a chance, an alternative. Dallas watched his wavering awe-stricken countenance.

“Take a cup of chocolate, Captain Diver. The morning air is chilly and bad for an empty stomach: we have a long ride before us.”

The master looked with an expression of horror at the surgeon, for now he understood what he had said before; but he held out his hand to take the cup of chocolate that Dallas offered to him: he put it to his lips, but it tasted like blood.

“Let me feel your pulse, Captain,” said the surgeon. “I fear something has made you unwell.”

“Dallas!” said Arthur, in a reproving voice.

“Ha!” continued the surgeon, without noticing Arthur. “Face flushed—pulse feverish—heart palpitating—no appetite—bad symptoms! A ride in the cool of the morning is my prescription.”

“Curses on all three of them!” muttered

Jack Diver ; “ they know all. I must go with them. But that fearful oath ! Damn it ! I can’t help it—better to break it than swing. Give me a glass of brandy, Captain,” he said, hoarsely, “ instead of this woman’s stuff. I know that I’m in your power now, thanks to that bare-backed, sneaking spy of yours,” and he scowled fiercely at the Carib.

“ An ounce of lead against a hempen string,” said the surgeon, laughing.

“ You are mistaken, Captain Diver,” said Arthur, gravely. “ The Captain Baron has never mentioned your name at all.”

“ Then how could you prove it against me ?” exclaimed Jack Diver, “ without —” But here he paused, for he suddenly became aware that he was condemning himself.

“ The symptoms are increasing,” said Dallas, pouring out a glass of brandy, and handing it to the Master. “ Swallow this, and get on your horse at once, if you will take a plain man’s advice.”

"I am ready," replied the Master, tossing off the spirit.

"How is this, Le Baron?" said Arthur, turning to the Carib, and speaking in a low voice.

"The white ant-traitor speaks for himself," replied the Chief. "His time is come!"

"What does the Chief mean by his time is come?" said Arthur, inquiringly.

The Carib was silent, and, before Arthur could repeat his question, Tom Ellam entered the room hurriedly, and, saluting our hero, held out to him a crumpled and dirty paper.

"A note for you, Sir!"

Arthur took it, and looked at it for a moment. The seal had been broken, but the direction was still legible. It was to him.

"Where did you get this, Ellam?" he inquired of the soldier, before he read its contents.

"It's a strange story, Sir, but it's true as gospel, Sir. The nigger who makes the choco-

late for you, Sir, went down to Jack's Well to get some of the clear spring water for that purpose. There's a clump of bamboos close by, that shades it from the sun, and under them he saw what he took to be a nigger sleeping. He kicked him with his foot, but he did not stir; he stooped down, for you know it was nearly dark and found it was an old, grey-headed nigger; but —" and here Ellam paused, shuddering.

"Go on!" said Arthur, impatiently.

"It's very horrible, Sir! The poor old brute wasn't asleep, nor was he dead; for he still breathed. But the ants had already eaten out one eye, and were busy at work with the other! They came crawling, creeping out of his mouth and ears, when the boy shook him, for he didn't at first see what was the matter."

Dallas rushed out of the room; Arthur turned sick at the description; the Carib remained imperturbable, and Jack Diver felt that something was coming beyond what had already been told.

“ Well, Sir, the boy was frightened, and he ran to tell me of it. I was in the stable, and as I had got the horses all ready, I gave them to some dark chaps to hold ; and, knowing you were busy, I got a shutter from the hospital, and a couple of black men to help me, and went down to the well. Sure enough, the boy had told the truth. It was a horrid sight, Sir—half rotten, Sir, and not yet dead. When I recovered myself a bit, I looked more particularly at him ; and though he was disfigured so much, I thought I knew his face. He was a very old man, with tufts of white wool on his skull, and very short and shrivelled. Then I remembered it was the old nigger, whom we found at the house where Tom Connolly nabbed the Frenchman waiting on the sick gentleman, yonder.”

And Ellam pointed at Jack Diver.

“ The negro, Pierrot,” said the Carib, sententially.

The master of the ‘ Sally ’ began to shake

more and more ; he feared what was coming, and was now impatient to be gone.

“ I saw a dirty-looking letter in his hand, as we were lifting him up, and I took it from him, as I thought it might be something of value—a note, like ; but when I looked at it closer, I found it was directed to you, Sir ; so I brought it here at once.”

“ Very well — that will do, Ellam ; wait outside. What can this be ? Some petition or complaint, I suppose ; yet they would say it was a bad omen to start under. Poor old man, what a death ! Is he dead, Dallas ?”

The surgeon had re-entered, and his ruddy cheeks were pale ; he filled himself a glass of brandy, and drank it off, and then said, seriously : “ In the whole course of my practice, I never saw anything so horrible as this. The ants have actually eaten into the brain. He will be dead before he reaches the hospital, but his body is already corrupted—a mass of living rotteness ; but nothing can be done for him,

and we might as well start before the sun rises."

As Arthur was buckling his sword round his waist, he said: "What could have taken him to the well? Just see what the letter is, Dallas; there's a good fellow; I had nearly forgotten it."

Dallas opened it.

"It begins oddly enough," he said.

"I am your enemy. I love Rosalie Devrien, Stop," and he finished it to himself.

"Well, what is it?" said Arthur, who had heard but imperfectly what the surgeon had said.

"Too many people here, Conway; this is marked very private," said Dallas, significantly.

"Ellam," called out Arthur, "are the men all gone yet?"

"The rear guard are just going past the mess-room, Sir."

"Halt them, and send the sergeant here."

"Yes, Sir."

Ellam ran across, and stopped the party, and was back again in a minute with the sergeant.

“Now, Captain Diver, I cannot stand upon any farther ceremony; if you please, you will accompany Sergeant Owens—you know the alternative,” then, turning to the sergeant, he said: “Owens, you will take charge of this gentleman, you will be civil to him; but he is on no account to leave your party until I come up.”

While this was going on, the Carib Chief glided quickly out of the room, across the grass, to the rear-guard; he spoke some words to Il Duque, and as quickly returned.

The sergeant touched his cap, and replied, briefly:

“Yes, Sir.”

Jack Diver arose sulkily, and followed him, meeting the Carib face to face on the steps. The Chief, however, took not the slightest notice of him. The Master, with a curse, passed on, and scrambled into his saddle.

Sergeant Owens, taking the horse by the bridle, led him across the grass to the rear-guard, and, placing him in the centre, gave a word of command for the party to move on.

“Now, what is it, Dallas?” said Arthur, turning to the surgeon. “I fear it is some bad news, by your looks.”

The surgeon hesitated. He was deliberating in his own mind whether he should tear the note up, and say nothing about it; and then he reflected on Arthur’s peculiar temperament. If he came back alive and well, and the shock should fall upon him suddenly, it might drive him mad, or kill him—better, then, to be prepared for the worst.

“This is a note from a man signing himself
“François de la Motte Devrien.”

“Why, he has left Dominica nearly three months!”

“Very likely; this has evidently been written some time ago, and may be all moonshine, after all.”

“Come, Dallas, the men are gone ; let me hear what it is, or give it to me.”

The surgeon handed him the soiled and crumpled note.

Arthur read it. As the surgeon had anticipated, its effect was fearful.

“Oh, my God !” said Arthur, turning deadly pale, and shaking like one in an ague fit, “the mulatto Lemantin !”

At this exclamation, the Carib Chief, whose presence had not been noticed either by Arthur or the surgeon, pricked up his ears, like a dog when he hears his name called.

“Dallas, that is the man who heads the band of rebel negroes, that fired at me in the canoe. My God, my God ! they are not three miles from La Belle Etoile, and Marguerite is there. I never thought of this.”

His agitation became fearful to behold.

“Be calm, Conway, I beseech you. After all, this may be only a *ruse*, to get you to lessen

your force, small enough already, for any purpose."

"Dallas, I am calm," said the horror-stricken young man. "But nerves of iron would not stand this shock without giving way a little."

There was a fearful struggle going on in his mind, as he said this, between his duty to his country, and the awful feeling that his beloved mistress was in a terrible danger. He would have flown there himself, and died in her defence, but could he desert his command?

Dishonoured, disgraced for ever, on the one hand, even if he should save her—misery and a broken heart, even if he returned a conqueror. Well had old Pierrot played Marinier's game; unconsciously, it is true: but, oh, how successfully! At length, with a voice unnaturally calm, as if despair had steeled his nerves, he said, turning away from Dallas: "Let us go."

"Stop one moment, Conway: Ellam is outside with his arms, and there are three Caribs

holding the horses. Send them over at once to La Belle Etoile. If they can arm a few slaves, they will be able to make a good defence against a mob of negroes."

As Arthur turned round, his eye lighted on the Carib Chief, and before he replied to Dallas, he said to Le Baron :

"Will the Chief do his friend a service? The mulatto Lemantin, and his bloodthirsty gang, go to burn the house where the fair-haired maiden rests. Will the Chief protect her?"

"Le Baron cannot go," briefly responded the Carib; "but he will send his brethren with the soldier. They are brave."

"Does he, too, desert me?" murmured the unhappy young man; "but how could I expect him to go, when I cannot myself?"

"Dallas, your advice is good," he said, calmly, like one who has made up his mind to die, and fears no longer death's awful advent, "and I will take it. But they, too, may refuse to

risk their lives for me. Le Baron ! What, gone ?”

The Carib Chief had left the room, unperceived ; but as he passed the three natives, he spoke a few words to them, briefly, but energetically. A slight groan, as a token of assent, was all their reply.

“ Ellam !” called out the young officer.

“ Here, Sir,” said the soldier, quickly entering the room. He had been waiting in the porch, close by, and had overheard part of what had been said.

“ Did you see the Chief pass out ?”

“ Yes, Sir ; he spoke a few words to the dark men, and then went down the hill at the double.”

“ Ellam,” said Arthur, slowly and painfully, “ you have always been a faithful friend to me. I do not speak to you now as a soldier, for this is not an occasion for it : will you volunteer on a dangerous service, for my sake ?”

“ I heard all, Sir,” replied the gamekeeper ;

“you need not distress yourself. I am both ready and willing.”

“Thank you, thank you, Ellam. I have one friend, at least. Should anything happen, tell her from me, that I will not survive her long ; and if I fall in action, my last thought is of her ; and—and—Ellam, do you understand me?—if —if they, the negroes prevail, she must not live. Better to die than to fall into the power of those fearful savages.”

In the meantime, Dallas had slipped down, and spoken to the Caribs, and they at once expressed their willingness to go with the soldier.

The gamekeeper, rough as he was by nature, felt deeply for his young master. He had been many times out with him to La Belle Etoile, and as servants often follow their masters' example, so he had struck up a great friendship with the pretty little quadroon girl, Fanfan.

“If I may be so bold, Sir,” said he, “as to venture a suggestion, could not a few of the militia men, who are left to guard the barracks,

be spared? say four, Sir: that will make us eight, and we might hold out a long time, against better men than niggers.”

“And a very good suggestion, too,” said Dallas; “eight resolute men, well-armed, will make them quite safe. It is not so bad, after all, Conway, and you may set out with a lighter heart.”

The directions were given to the sergeant of militia promptly; and before Arthur left Morne Bruce, he had at least the satisfaction to see the seven, under the command of Ellam, who was appointed corporal on the spot, start for La Belle Etoile; yet his heart was sad, and his spirit was drooping within him. They might be too late—and then the anxious and heart-rending suspense.

But when he got on his horse, and rode down the zigzag road, his mind began to be occupied with other thoughts. He had never seen a shot fired in anger; he knew little of the strength of the force that would be opposed to

him ; his own little army was a strange medley. He could depend upon the regulars, but they were scarcely a hundred in number. The militia were tolerably armed and drilled, and would no doubt fight well ; but would they be in hand ? Of the Caribs' manner of warfare he knew nothing ; it was even uncertain whether they would remain faithful. Of the Chief he had no doubt ; still there was something mysterious about him ; and was his information regarding the time and place of the landing of the republicans correct ? These reflections, happily for our hero, for the moment displaced the gloomy forebodings of evil with which his disposition, prone to melancholy, had again so nearly overwhelmed his reason.

CHAPTER IX.

ARTHUR CONWAY and the surgeon caught the rear-guard just as they had arrived at the head of the narrow valley to the southward of the Morne, up which the troops had to pass before they began to climb the mountain chain, which divides the windward and leeward sides of the island.

It is peculiarly difficult to describe in detail the general scenery of these gorgeous islands. They have been likened in form to a sheet of paper crumbled up tightly in the hand, and then released, so irregularly are the mountains piled

by volcanic action. To give the reader some idea of the broken nature of the scenery, it is stated, though it has never been measured, that there are not more than three square leagues of level ground in the part of Dominica called Caves Terre. In the Basse Terre, there is one plain of a few square leagues, called the Grand Savannah. All the rest is mountain and valley, cliff and hollow, yawning precipices and broken gullies. Yet, in very few places is the rock bare, except on the face of the cliffs that meet the ocean waves, and this principally on the leeward side, for the land slopes more gently down to meet the fresh trade-wind ; but up to the very summits of the mountains there is a perpetual garment of the loveliest and greenest vegetation that eye ever lighted on.

As Arthur and Dallas rode up to the rear-guard, the advanced party had begun to ascend the mountain-track, guided by La Perouse. Hitherto there had been nothing to retard their progress ; but now the path, if it can be dig-

nified by such a title, winding amidst rocks and trees and ever ascending, precluded the possibility of marching more than two deep, and in many places it was necessary to go in Indian file, so that, although the whole force did not number more than three hundred armed men, the distance from point to rear was very considerable.

Jack Diver was a very bad horseman; but the animal he rode was well accustomed to mountain travelling, and he being still weak from the effects of the fever protracted by the habitual use of ardent spirits, found it less fatiguing to ride than to walk. He was still in the middle of Sergeant Owen's party, grumbling and cursing, and in a very bad humour. He had seen the Carib Chief join the rear-guard in the valley, and again a sense of fear, vague and indefinite certainly, yet sufficiently powerful to shake his already shattered nerves to a fearful extent, crept over him; he even felt more secure when Arthur rode up with the surgeon,

although he hated both of them from the bottom of his heart.

Arthur called out to pass the word to let him fall into the rear. Jack Diver reined in his horse to suffer those behind him to go by. He looked stealthily at each individual ; but the Carib Chief was not there. In an open spot Arthur rode up to him. "I must apologize to you," said he, good-humouredly, "for my somewhat unceremonious treatment ; but you must be aware, Captain Diver, that it was the best thing I could do for your own sake. By coming with us, you will be able to clear yourself of all suspicion ; had you stayed behind at Morne Bruce, there was really much greater danger. The militia had got some information, I know not how, that you had been concerned with Le Bar and Petun—the fact is, I dared not leave you with them."

"Thank you for nothing," growled the Master. "I'm in your clutches now ; but once out of them, look out for squalls. I'll be even

with you, fair or foul. Well, it's a pretty go ; a little whipper-snapper like that, with scarce a bristle on his chin, riding the high horse, and walking his betters off a prisoner, after having seduced his sweetheart. Well, if I don't owe you a sweet trifle, my young jackanapes, I'm a Dutchman, so look out for squalls, my hearty. And you, too, you sneering, red-faced sawbones, with your cursed laugh, only let me get a chance at you. I wonder whether the pistols in those gigamaree, what-do-you-call-ems, are loaded? As sure as a gun, I'll have a shot if they are, at somebody. That painted nigger with the feathers on his head first—then—”

“ Captain Diver,” said the soft voice of our hero, “ if you will promise me not to try to escape, you need not consider yourself any longer as a prisoner ; and, if you can, you may remain a spectator when we meet the French.”

“ I don't know what right you have at all to treat me in this way,” said Jack Diver, in a

loud voice. At that moment a hawk screamed shrilly. The rear-guard were in a narrow path, bounded on both sides by a dense thicket of shrubs, so winding, that ten yards in front you could see nothing but stems and green leaves. Three of the Caribs slipped into the shadow of the bushes silently and stealthily. Those behind immediately closed up. Their absence was not perceived by any of the white men, and they remained hid until Jack Diver, Dallas, and Arthur, had passed about a hundred yards, and then came forth. Another man joined them. It was the Carib Chief.

Whether Jack Diver gave his promise or not, matters but little; for he was not one likely to be particular, if, by breaking it, he could gain any advantage; but the three still rode in the rear of the party.

To understand the following scene, it is necessary that the reader should have before his mind's eye the localities and the exact situation of the actors in it.

Nothing is so difficult to describe, even with the assistance of the limner's art, as a tropical mountain path. Unlike glaciers, Alps, and sierras, there exists a perpetual variety: one may say that at every yard the scenery changes.

The mountain range, running from north to south, along the centre of the island, sends out vast branches or spurs, radiating like a star to all the western points of the compass, intersected by deep valleys and awful ravines.

Sometimes these spurs reach the ocean, and end abruptly in a broken cliff; sometimes leaving, at their base, a small strip of flat ground, as at Roseau. Others again run out with sharp points into the sea, like Scott's head, forming bays, with a white sandy beach, as the one at the foot of the Souffriere; or narrow cavernous creeks, into which the heaving swell of the deep-blue ocean rolls with a hollow, reverberating sound.

The leading files of the British force had reached the end of one of these vast spurs,

where it joined the main chain, nearly in the centre of the island. The track, turning at a great angle round the head of the valley, entered suddenly into a deep, gloomy, tangled forest, out of the bosom of which rushed a narrow, but impetuous stream, leaping from rock to rock into the valley, far, far below. The water was swollen by a thunder-shower, that had burst over the mountains, though not a drop had fallen in the valley below: the rocks were slippery, and the passage dangerous. The officer in charge of the advanced guard, therefore, halted his men, to cut down bamboos, so as to form a temporary bridge over the turgid stream, and the axes were quickly at work.

The remainder of the party were still winding along the path cut in the mountain side, and covered, from front to rear, nearly a quarter of a mile.

It was an awful path; it made the eye quiver, and the heart sick!

Not three feet wide, in many places! Above, an overhanging cliff, or the steep mountain face,

five hundred feet of crag and broken rock : below, down, a thousand feet down, wound that stream like a silver thread. It seemed as if you could throw a pebble into its bed ; but it was far away ; the dizzy height mocked the sight. True, the eye was somewhat relieved by the wild, fantastic beauty of the shrubs and plants, which sprang up amidst the rocks, and dotted the side of the valley with vivid greenness ; but in one part, along which the rear-guard were now advancing, it was singularly awful. The spur threw out a bold elbow into the valley, and round the arc of the double curve, the path, a mere ledge of slippery rock, wound, with a precipice above and a precipice below, sheer, abrupt and stupifying.

Just as the last file of soldiers had doubled it, the word to halt was passed from the front.

In the spot where the three horsemen were stopped, there was a widening in the path ; a hollow scooped by the force of the descending water in the mountain's side.

Arthur Conway, not knowing what had

caused the apparently sudden halt, spurred his horse by the master of the transport, and calling to the men in front to make way for him, which they did by clinging to the faces of the rocks, rode forwards to see what impediment obstructed the march of the troops; and Dallas followed him, without either of them bestowing one thought on Jack Diver.

But no sooner were they shut out from his view by the men closing in again, than he determined to return by the way he had come, and to take his chance of getting on board some vessel at Roseau. His enemies would be out of the way, for some time, fighting the French; his consignees knew nothing of his treachery. With their assistance he might escape to England, and he might live to be revenged on him he hated from a double motive. And then the oath, and its fearful penalty, if he broke it. The French might overpower the small British force; he might be taken prisoner. And how could he clear himself to Le Blanc? Whilst he was making up

his mind, a dark figure had stolen unperceived close behind him, with a small basket in his hand of split reeds, out of which came a low, buzzing, murmuring sound. He lay down quietly across the path, at the point of the first angle of the elbow of the mountain spur, not many feet from the hind legs of the horse.

Jack Diver, with a scowling look, turned his horse round with some difficulty. It plunged, and reared slightly, but went on.

Occupied with retaining his seat, the master of the transport scarcely perceived the figure lying in the path. He could not see who it was, for the face of the man was towards the ground. But the horse saw it at once. The animal, accustomed to mountain roads from its birth, had often stepped over both men and animals, which are sometimes forced in the narrowest parts to lie down to let the heavier and stronger pass, in that highly dangerous and disagreeable method, lifted his feet cautiously, one by one, so as not to tread on the prostrate figure.

As the horse was above him, the man lifted with one hand the lid of the basket, and a swarm of wasps flew suddenly out, buzzing and humming fiercely, and in a moment they began to settle on the moving object.

The horse commenced switching his tail to drive them away, pricking up his ears, and snorting with terror.

The man on the path lay quite still until they had thus moved on a few yards, and then he raised his head a little, and watched them with his keen, black eyes.

The wasps, driven off for a moment, became only the more irritated, and returned with vigour and wonderful pertinacity to the attack, beginning to sting the poor animal furiously, in all the tender parts. They assailed the wretched master in his turn, darting their venomous barbs into his face and hands, and driving them both nearly frantic. The horse plunged furiously, and Jack Diver, losing his stirrups and his presence of mind together, twisted his hands into

the horse's mane to keep his seat, letting the reins fall on its neck. At last, with a rear and a bound into the air, the maddened animal darted off at a gallop, but the faster he went, the closer stuck the persevering wasps.

Jack Diver shut his eyes, screaming with fear and pain.

Then the Carib Chief rose up and again the hawk-like scream echoed along the valley. The turn is to be made—can the horse recover himself? Yes, maddened as he is he sees the danger instinctively. His speed slackens—he throws himself on his haunches, with his fore feet on the very brink of the precipice. One more chance! The blind infatuated man remains on his back.

Again the horse feels the stings of his deadly persecutors; again he plunges forward striving to turn quickly round the corner. Round, and he is in comparative safety.

On a sudden from behind a buttress of projecting rock there start across the path three

dusky forms, flinging their arms wildly in the air. Then was heard that rare and awful sound, the shriek of a horse in the fear of certain and coming death, when swerving on one side he lost his footing on the slippery shelf, and struggling madly but unsuccessfully to recover it, he fell over and over—down—down, a thousand feet down !

From the sailor's lips there came no cry.

But once more the hawk screamed.

A glorious feast to the ants and the Johnny crows !

* * * * *

Le Baron waved his hand from the point of the rock over which the unfortunate master of the transport had fallen. The three Caribs retreated swiftly towards Roseau.

Several of the wasps were still droning about as if seeking for a fresh victim, but the Chief stood there like a statue, with his arms folded across his breast and his eye fixed on a small dark spot far down in the valley. The insects

buzzed round him and seemed inclined to settle on his limbs—not a nerve or a muscle quivered. Had he some charm? or was it that his body was smeared with oil? One by one they flew off leaving him untouched by their venomous stings, and there he remained silent and abstracted. Who shall analyse his thoughts?

Arthur Conway stayed by the running water until the whole party had crossed it safely. When the last of the rear-guard were on the temporary bridge he missed Jack Diver.

He asked Sergeant Owens what had become of him. The Sergeant had never thought of him after he had been taken out of his charge; his men had been joking and laughing together, and had moved on after their officers had passed, and he had heard nothing but what he thought was a hawk screaming twice—and one of the men said that he had heard besides a strange unearthly cry.

Arthur had been standing close to the torrent and the noise of the water had deafened

him ; but when the Sergeant spoke of the hawk screaming, he recognised at once the Carib Chief's cry.

“ What can Le Baron want ? Dallas, will you hold my horse for a minute, I must go back and see what has become of the sailor,” said Arthur, somewhat impatiently.

“ He has run away.”

“ I doubt it—I think I frightened him too much : at all events I will go and see.”

As the young officer rounded the shoulder of the spur he saw the Carib Chief standing in the attitude we have described, but no Jack Diver. The native did not move. Arthur laid his hand on the Chief's shoulder, and said :

“ Has the Captain Baron seen anything of the sailor who wished to flog him in the big ship ?”

“ The red-ant traitor is there,” replied the Carib, briefly pointing to the abyss below.

Arthur shuddered, the marks of the struggling horse were distinctly visible on the brink of the precipice ; but in vain he strained his eyes to discover their bodies in the wild depths beneath.

“How came this, Le Baron?” he said, in a hoarse voice, for he immediately blamed himself for the sailor’s death. “It is very horrible.”

“The red ant traitor was a fool—he let his horse tumble over the rock where the path ends.”

“Poor fellow,” said the young officer, pityingly, “what a terrible fate!”

“The red ant traitor was running away. Why does the friend of Le Baron lament his death?”

Three times had the Chief repeated the words: “The red ant traitor.” They brought to Arthur’s mind his first interview with the Carib and what he had said on that occasion. The red ant traitor, whom the wasp wished to kill, but was prevented, was then the unfortunate master of the transport. The Carib was the wasp, Jack Diver the red ant. The Chief must have killed him—but how came both horse and rider where they were. That, for a long time, remained a mystery to our hero.

“He was a traitor, then?” he said, inquiringly.

“Why should the Chief lie? did he not take

the oath at La Maison Vide with Marinier and the mulatto Lemantin ?”

The Carib's words had, unconsciously, a terrible effect on Arthur. They recalled to him, in a moment, the fearful danger of his mistress, exposed to the attack of the brutal negroes : he turned away in bitter grief, and went back silent and dejected to the torrent. The Carib Chief stood on the point of the rock for some time in precisely the same attitude with his eye fixed on the same spot. And when he quitted it he did not follow the armed force.

“Well ?” said Dallas, as Arthur came up, pale and with anguish depicted on his handsome countenance.

“He has paid the penalty of his treachery—let us move on.”

They crossed the stream, and rode rapidly through the gloomy forest until they caught up the rear guard once more. Then the sergeant reported to Arthur, that many of the Caribs were missing, one by one they had glided into the tangled wilderness and disappeared.

A halt was made in the shade of the wood near a gurgling stream, which, gushing out of a rock, wandered, for a little way, through a tolerably level and comparatively open piece of grass-covered ground; grougrou palms, arecas, fern-trees, and gigantic bamboos were scattered or clustered around.

The sun was shining fiercely in the valleys and on the mountain's sides, but here, though there was little wind, the green leaves and the limpid water, the deep shade, and the moist grass, imparted a delightful freshness. The soldiers, throwing themselves on the ground, or seated on the rocks beneath the delicious shade, began to eat their rations, which they had brought ready cooked, and revelled in luxurious draughts of the pure limpid streamlet.

The Caribs were privately counted by Sergeant Owens, as they lay stretched or squatted on the ground; some already fast asleep, others smoking in perfect silence: instead of fifty, there remained but thirty. The Chief was not

there, nor was the one called El Duque. La Perouse, however, who had hitherto led them, was still present.

Arthur Conway, Dallas, and the other officers of the regulars and militia, were seated in a circle round some cold provisions, which the slaves of the latter had carried on their heads in baskets, when the sergeant reported to Conway the desertion of the Caribs.

It gave rise to many exclamations of surprise and surmises as to the cause of their absence. Some suggested that they had gone on before them, to give notice of the approach of the British force to the French; others thought that they might have done so, to bring them information of the position and force of the Republican troops; but none guessed the truth, not even Arthur, or, if he had a vague hope, he did not express it, but remained moody and silent. Not so the others, for, enlivened with their rest and food, both solid and fluid, they talked and laughed, and many a joke and many

a merry song, rang through the wilderness of forest, startling the parrots on the lofty trees, and setting them screaming, as they flew circling round.

Arthur rode at the head of his force, with La Perouse at his side ; the track still ascending, as it wound through the dense forest.

“ Does the English Chief feel the wind in his face ? ” said the Carib, suddenly.

“ Yes,” replied the young officer ; “ and I hear the roar of the sea.”

They began to descend ; the climate changed in a few yards, and the fresh trade-wind came refreshingly, fanning the heated and panting soldiers. The ground became more open, and the valleys more regular and less abrupt. Here and there, amidst the trees, the blue sea, dotted with white crests, peeped pleasantly. Everything seemed cheerier, gayer, more full of life, than on the leeward side.

When they had descended about two miles, the track made a sudden bend, at right angles,

to the northward, skirting the dense mass of trees, and winding round the heads of the valleys. Scattered houses and plantations could be seen occasionally near the sea, and the sail of a drogher, creeping along the coast, shone like a solitary sea-gull.

About two o'clock, as they were crossing a high, narrow ridge, the Carib pointed to the north, and uttered one word: "Rocroix."

The march had been a severe one to Europeans; for the heat on the leeward-side, although they had halted during the middle of the day, had been intense; and the extreme steepness and difficulty of the track had caused the distance to seem greater than it really was: but when they learnt that they had come in sight of Rocroix, a spontaneous cheer burst from every mouth, and they stepped out briskly and willingly. Strange that the sight of approaching danger should cheer the heart of man, but so it is with Englishmen. About four o'clock on the 27th of July, they came in sight

of the French, who had landed two days before, but dared not move until the promised reinforcements arrived.

It would be difficult, and it is not necessary for the story, to relate what manœuvres were performed, and how after a short but not bloodless struggle, in which regulars, militia, and Caribs equally distinguished themselves, the republican troops were signally beaten and forced from all their positions, till at last they were obliged to take refuge in some houses which they had temporarily fortified. One party of twenty-five escaped to Marie Galante in a large piragua, the rest were surrounded, and being entirely cut off from their supplies, after a few hours surrendered at discretion. One small party however, commanded by Le Blanc, still held out gallantly, though enraged at being duped by the French settlers and the coloured people whom he had expected to join him in force, and seeing casually some of the Caribs, who, contrary to their usual manner of warfare

had, in imitation of the British soldiers, shown themselves to the enemy, he began to despair of any successful defence, and weakened by the loss of blood from a severe though not dangerous wound, haggard and pale from starvation, want of water and rest, after one final effort to break through the British lines which had drawn closely round, in which he received another slight wound, he lost heart, as well he might. A flag of truce was sent by Conway, pointing out the uselessness and hopelessness of further resistance.

Le Blanc thought of Rosalie : if he persevered no quarter would be given by the Caribs, or they would die of starvation.

His proud spirit yielded, and after telling the men that brave as they were they could do no more, and cursing the treachery of the settlers and the negroes, he, too, surrendered at discretion. A captured tent had been erected for Conway in the shade of some palm trees. When Le Blanc, all bloody, with his uniform torn and

stained, his beard unshorn, his face ghastly pale, his cheeks all sunken, his eyes dim, one arm hanging helpless by his side was conducted before Arthur Conway, the young officer did not at first recognise the gay, sprightly, light-hearted François Devrien; but addressed him as a stranger kindly, complimenting him on his gallant defence, returning him his sword, and offering him his parole.

“Will Captain Conway have the goodness to offer me something to drink first? *Ma foi*, this fighting is thirsty work,” said Le Blanc in English.

“My God! is it indeed you, Devrien?” cried Arthur, starting up and filling a tumbler of rum-and-water, he handed it to Le Blanc who drank it greedily. “This is a strange meeting; but you are wounded and ill, let me send for the surgeon.”

“Answer me one question first,” said Devrien, in a hollow voice, “did you get a note from me?”

The question went to Arthur's heart like a dagger's stab. He turned deadly pale.

François, weak as he was, perceived his emotion and repeated his words, saying :

“ I sent you a note, did you not get it ? ”

Arthur thinking of himself and Marguerite, murmured :

“ Too late, I fear, it was too late.”

“ Now I see why the mulatto Lemantin was not here. O, Rosalie, sweet Rosalie,” cried the Frenchman in bitter agony, and overcome by weakness and emotion he fell fainting on the ground.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Arthur Conway saw François fainting on the ground, he felt for the first time what a strong affection he had conceived towards him.

There was something mournfully sad in the sympathy that bound him to the young Frenchman. Marguerite had absorbed all his thoughts and fears until François had recalled to him another form, and another sufferer. Rosalie, who had been to him like a sister, Rosalie, the kind-hearted, the affectionate, the mediator between his wayward spirit and his love; she,

who had reconciled him to the world, and had cleared his path to the object of his affection—she, too, was a sufferer. One was bound up in the other, not only himself and Marguerite, but François and Rosalie, all alike—all equally. Once more his selfishness was rebuked. He must act promptly and decidedly.

Assistance was soon procured, and Dallas was sent for. The wounded and senseless François was undressed, and his hurts washed and bandaged. There was nothing dangerous in them, and all the surgeon feared was over-excitement when he awoke.

About two miles off, on a hill that sloped gently downwards to the sea-shore, shaded by a noble grove of palm trees, there stood a pleasant, cheerful-looking house, in the midst of a snug plantation. A messenger was sent to ascertain if the inmates would receive a wounded officer, and a reply soon arrived, saying that although the master was away from the plantation, the house was at their service. Indeed,

the overseer came himself, bringing with him refreshments of various kinds, that he thought would be grateful to the sufferers. A litter of boughs was constructed, and François Devrien, borne by four soldiers, was carried gently down to the plantation.

Dallas and Arthur rode with him, to see him safely lodged.

As they were putting him to bed, and changing his bloody linen for that of the master of the house, our hero perceived, hanging by a hair chain round the young Frenchman's neck, the miniature that Rosalie had told him of. His curiosity was keenly aroused, and he unclasped it gently.

The room was closely jalousied, and, to see it better, and to be alone, he went out into the porch.

He was painfully startled. He had seen that face before often—very often. He knew it well, every feature—every line. The eyes, the hair were the same, though here all was calm,

smiling, and gentle—there, all convulsed in the agony of death.

He turned it round. The black hair and the golden hair, twined and linked together, as Rosalie had said.

He took from his own neck a locket, and touched the spring. The same colour—the same shade—the same glossy silkiness !

But there was more. Above the hair was engraved the word “Eugenie,” below it “Raymond.” The hair and the name alike his mother’s ! A tear started unbidden in Arthur’s eye. It was the first he had shed since his mother’s death.

Yet, what a mystery ! How strange—how perplexing ! He longed for the time when he should be able to question François ; yet Rosalie had said that he knew nothing. Who could Raymond—the man in the picture be—Raymond and Eugenie. The names—the hair—the picture ! What a mystery !

He went back into the room, and looked

intently upon the pale face of the unconscious François. The same features, the same hair, the very image of the miniature ; he had possessed it ever since he was a child. Raymond, his father ! who then, was Eugenie—his mother. A strange desire to return at once to England, began to steal almost unperceived, subtly and treacherously over Arthur's mind, to throw up everything ; his commission, his love, his fame, his honour, to do what it was nearly now too late to do, and what he ought to have done long ago, and what he would have done, but for his ill-fated, unrequited love, to clear away the cloud of mystery that hung around his birth.

Had he forgotten Marguerite ? Yes, for the moment, in the selfishness of his new and all absorbing mystery, he did not think of her danger.

Dallas had been watching him. He saw him remove the miniature from the neck of the wounded Frenchman ; he saw him go out with

it in his hand, and on his return replace it, after which he remained silent and abstracted, yet gazing intently at the features of his patient. Gifted with imperturbable coolness himself, he could still understand the singularity of Arthur's temperament, since his visit with him to La Belle Etoile. The surgeon had been watching him closely. There was much to admire in our hero's character; kind to his inferiors, gentle, yet firm, with the soldiers; cheerful, and even gay with his daily associates, he was beloved by all, and yet there was a brooding melancholy at times, a tendency to see things in their worst and most painful light, a selfish despondency which the clear-headed surgeon had quickly perceived; but not being aware of the original cause, he set it down as purely constitutional.

He spoke and broke the spell.

"Come, Conway," he said, "you are doing no good here; I will take care of this young Frenchman, and if you will leave him alone, I

will guarantee his recovery, but not otherwise."

"What did you say, Dallas?" said Arthur, awaking from his strange reverie.

I said, "If you stay here, you will only do my patient harm. You have plenty to do elsewhere ; go, there's a good fellow."

"Yes ; I have much to do," replied Conway almost mechanically ; "but it will be too late."

"This is just the way always with you. Why do you look so sad about it. You have just done one good job, licked the French, *ecce signum* ; get on your horse, and do another."

"Promise me, Dallas, to look after this wounded officer ; if he dies I shall never be happy again."

"Pshaw ! a little blood frightens you—he's only faint from loss of it ; the best thing that could happen to him, for there will be no fever. I'll set him on his legs in a day or two ; see, he is coming to already."

The young Frenchman's eyes partially opened as the surgeon said this, as if he had heard it, and his lips murmured one word, it was—Rosalie.

Arthur stooped down, and imprinted a kiss on the pale forehead of the wounded man, and said in a low sad tone, "I know not who you are; but, henceforth you shall be my brother." Then, turning to the surgeon, he said, "Dallas, I go; take care of him for my sake." And he left the room.

The surgeon followed him with his eyes, and when he had disappeared, shook his head gravely, for he began to think that his mind was disordered; then, feeling his patient's pulse, and placing cooling drinks by his bedside, he went to look after the rest of the wounded.

Arthur's arrangements were quickly made.

An officer, with a strong party of the militia, was left to take charge of the wounded and prisoners, and to watch if any fresh attempt at landing should be made by the republicans.

Tom Connolly was selected with another steady man, to wait upon François Devrien, and to take charge of Arthur's horse, which he left behind for his use.

The Caribs had already disappeared.

Early on the following morning, the rest of the party, about two hundred strong, returned by the mountain-path to Roseau with Arthur Conway at their head. Nothing worth recording happened on the march. As they approached the town, Arthur became very impatient and hurried on, in advance of the men, alone.

In the creeper-covered porch of his quarters, there sat a man, pale, woe-begone, and with his arm bandaged. As Arthur bounded up the steps he rose from his seat with difficulty and attempted to salute.

Our hero's heart sank within him—it was Ellam.

“In mercy's name tell me what has happened,” said the young officer, in a voice full of bitter anguish. “Is she dead?”

Ellam looked at his young master with the deepest commiseration ; he had no good news to tell him, and he scarcely knew what to say.

“ Speak, Ellam, I implore, I command you. I am prepared for the worst, see, I am calm,” continued Arthur, in a low, quiet, yet unnatural voice, whilst beads of sweat stood on his brow and ran down his cheeks, his whole frame shivered visibly, his bright eyes were fixed and dilated, and his hands playing unconsciously with his sword.

“ I have little to say, Sir,” said the soldier, huskily and unwillingly ; “ but we have been defeated.”

“ Quick, quick ! tell me all : do not keep me in this awful suspense. What has been their fate ?”

“ I do not know, Sir.”

“ You do not know ? and yet you are here alive ! Ellam, I did not expect this of you,” said Arthur, reproachfully ; yet he was scarcely conscious of his words.

“I was never there at all, Sir. We could not force the pass.”

“Not force the pass—not force the pass! What do you mean?”

“The negroes prevented us. They shot us down like deer from behind the rocks. Two of the dark men fell by my side. I was hit, as you see, Sir; and the militia men ran away as hard as possible: and what could I do, Sir, alone, and hurt, against a lot of armed men, even though they were niggers? They rushed out, screaming and yelling, like demons, and finished the two dark men with the butts of their muskets, Sir; but they did not see me, for I crept away behind the rocks, near the sea. Then, Sir, I fainted, and lay on the beach for some time, for when I recovered my senses, the sun was high up in the skies.

“I could not move, Sir, I was so weak with loss of blood; but I saw a long, narrow boat, full of men, coming from past the town, about a quarter of a mile out. I would have given

worlds to shout, Sir, but I could not speak; but it seems they saw me, for they paddled the boat in, and two of the dark men waded through the water, and lifted me in their arms into the boat, and gave me some cocoa nut milk to drink: a delicious draught it was, Sir. It revived me a little, and I could see and understand what was going on. They paddled on some miles, Sir, and went up a narrow creek; but I forgot to tell you, that after they had picked me up, one of them gave a sort of scream, but none of the negroes on shore showed themselves: I suppose they had gone. They landed amongst some thick trees, and pulled out of the bushes a small canoe, which they put in the water, and then one of them, the tall man, Sir, with the feathers on his head, who was in the room when you started to fight the French, Sir, came up to me, and said, as far as I could understand him: ‘Soldier, tell the English Captain,’ meaning you, Sir, ‘that the Captain Baron is his friend; he is

gone to look for the mulatto, Lemantin.' I was still helpless, Sir, and they put me in the canoe, and two of the dark men paddled me back to the town, and left me there: that is all I have to tell you, Sir."

"Forgive me, Ellam," said Arthur, kindly, "for my inconsiderate words; you have indeed acted like a true and faithful friend, and I owe you much."

"Never mind me, Sir," replied the game-keeper; "I only wish I could have done something for you, Sir, and for myself too," he added, under his voice.

"Have you heard anything since?"

"Nothing at all, Sir. I could get no one to go out in that direction, they are all too afraid of the negroes."

"And have none of the Caribs shown themselves since?"

"Not one that I know of, Sir."

"What can the Carib Chief mean?—the mulatto, Lemantin! too late! ever too late! O,

my God! the Carib's idea is revenge—revenge only, not protection—misery, misery, he has gone to avenge her death, or what is worse—mercy, mercy, the thought suffocates me. Ellam, my friend, tell me what I must do. The Chief has been too late. I cannot think for myself—I shall go mad.”

“ Here come the men, Sir. If I might be so bold I would take a strong party and march out to La Belle Etoile at once.”

“ But they are jaded and fatigued by their long march, Ellam: it would be cruel not to rest them.”

“ I'll get you plenty of volunteers, Sir, depend upon it. I'll just show them what the niggers have been doing to me. They're not over-fond of that breed, and they like you, Sir. So you have only to say the word.”

“ Can I do this? Will it not be too selfish?” murmured the unhappy officer.

“ Oh, no, Sir,” replied Ellam, who had caught his words.

“ Think, Sir, the negroes are in arms ; they will be burning, plundering, committing all sorts of horrors ; they’ll get hold of rum, Sir, and then think what will happen. Do let me go, and try if they will volunteer.”

“ God bless you, Ellam !” murmured Arthur.
“ Go, but mind, I do not order it.”

A mountain march of fifteen miles, in a broiling July day, in the tropics, and yet there was not a murmur ; not a heart but what was willing and ready to follow their officer, whom they loved. Some could not do it ; their physical powers had given way, and they alone showed any discontent. Fifty good hearts and true were under arms, after a couple of hours’ rest and a good meal. When there is work before them, what will not British soldiers do ? And Ellam, with his rough eloquence, though perhaps it was not necessary, had pointed out to many the cruel situation of their Captain ;— woe to the negroes who should come across them in arms !

Arthur passed the two hours restlessly, walking up and down his room in perfect agony. Every now and then he would stop opposite to the picture, where the dark-haired man was struggling in the throes of death; and would think for a moment who that man could be, but he could not reason. Too late! Ever that morbid despondency, ever the same idea that he was predestined to be unhappy. He would be too late, and Marguerite —

The two hours have passed away, and he is again on foot, at the head of his faithful soldiers. What thought he of fatigue in his mad excitement!

A dark and ominous cloud was rising above the horizon, immediately over the sun, which was now fast sinking in the west. Rays of fiery red, unsteady and flickering, darted upwards towards the zenith. Far over the sea stretched the shadow of that cloud, changing its cerulean to the deepest purple. The mountain peaks, and the light clouds that hung

around them, seemed all on fire, and the crests of the lofty trees were streaked with flame. A flash of lightning, of the palest, ghastliest blue, darted suddenly along the horizon, illuminating the leaden, appalling masses, that came rolling over the sea.

Arthur saw not the storm rising in its majesty of terror—the storm was in his mind; yet he did not neglect to take proper precautions against a sudden attack. Men were sent on in advance, and, where practicable, along the flanks; but not a single enemy was visible.

As they passed through the narrow track between the cliff and the sea-beach, one of the men pointed out the marks of bullets on the rocks, and the traces of blood on the path. Arthur shuddered. This, then, was the spot where Ellam had been wounded. He recognized, in a moment, the rocks where the negroes had shown themselves, when the Carib Chief had screamed from the canoe, and there the dreaded mulatto, Lemantin, had scrambled down the cliff.

But now all was still, save the rumbling of the distant thunder, and the roar of the fast-increasing surf on the rocky shore.

They had not encountered a single human being on their way, to glean tidings of the probable fate of those they sought.

As they approached La Belle Etoile, Arthur's heart sank within him more and more. No signs of any one stirring—no negroes in the fields at work ; but they might have sought shelter from the coming storm.

As he hastened up the narrow path, and at length stood on the lawn, what a sight presented itself to his eyes ! What a sight for him, above all men ! Where the house had stood, a charred, confused, black mass, from which small puffs of white smoke still came issuing forth.

For a few minutes, he remained stupified, spell-bound, gazing at the ruins.

The blue lightning ran along the hills, the thunder crashed over-head ; the rain, as if the

clouds had suddenly burst, came rushing down in a seething torrent; an unnatural darkness settled all around; the earth gave up a reeking mist; the surrounding landscape disappeared: all was gloomy, terrible, and desolate.

The soldiers ran to shelter themselves under the trees, and in such of the out-buildings as had not been completely destroyed.

But Arthur stood there, staring at what had been the houses, unconscious of everything, save his own misery.

A vivid flash, a crash, as if the world was at an end, awakens him—he looks round. The mangrove-tree, so old and gigantic, under whose boughs he had so lately parted with Marguerite, was rent from top to bottom, its boughs scattered about, and its trunk on fire. What an omen! Then followed a frightful lull, broken only by the dropping of the water from the foliage of the trees.

The same dull, heavy stillness, was in Arthur's heart; another broad, red stream of

light, another rattling thunder clap, and again down poured the rain in one continued sheet, foaming against the earth. And still he stands there. But see; there is a sparkle in his eye, like the lightning flash, round his brow there gathers a dark, ominous cloud; the sound of a word like the thunder-clap rings in his ears, new, and until now unknown to him, called forth in the terror of the storm by that blackened mass of ruins, by that splintered and blasted tree, by the warring elements, and the desolation of the scene. A terrible word, more terrible in its novelty—Revenge!

A pale, rosy streak of light, at first narrow, but fast increasing in breadth, illumines the western horizon. Fainter and fainter the thunder rolls away amidst the mountains. The cloud is tinged with pink and gold. The sea glows with gorgeous colours. The pale rose-coloured streak becomes a fiery red; the sun has that moment sunk beneath the horizon, but yet far up into the zenith dart rays of flame, gradually melting into the soft blue of the evening sky.

And now the soldiers come forth from their shelter, and commence their search. Not a single living thing can be found. Here and there, amidst the out-buildings, are half-picked carcases of various animals, horses, cattle, pigs, and goats, lying where they had been shot down; a horrid stench arising from their mangled remains.

The mill, built of huge rough stones, has partially defied the power of the fire. What a sight was there; a mass of mutilated, disfigured corpses, men, women, and children, scorched by fire, half eaten by the ants, with their white teeth grinning in the horrid agonies of a cruel death; they were all negroes.

The soldiers drew back disgusted and dismayed at this shocking spectacle.

"The well—try the well," said an old soldier, "they hide there sometimes on such occasions."

The soldiers rushed to the well; the cord was cut in two.

“Hark!” said one, “I hear a groan; there is some one alive in it. Hallo! any one down there?”

Another smothered groan was the reply.

The sergeant rushed across to where Arthur was standing, and touching his cap, reported to him that there was a living being in the well.

“My God! can it be Marguerite? I have heard of such things before,” and he flew rather than ran to the spot.

The soldiers had knotted some pieces of old rope together, and had fastened them to the remains of the one round the windlass, and forming, at the extremity, a stirrup, for the feet to rest in, a bold, athletic, young soldier, was carefully lowered down. His feet soon rested on something without touching the water: a deep groan startled him. “Hold on,” he sung out.

There was little light in the well, so releasing his feet, and lowering himself a little, he groped about with them, until he found

them in the water, but again they rested on some substance. Stooping down, and still grasping the rope with one hand, and twining it round his arm, he contrived to get the other round the thing that had first met his feet, and clasping it tightly to his body, for, in truth, it was not heavy; he shouted out to the men above to raise him gently.

Arthur stood on the brink of the well, watching with a beating heart, and trembling frame, the reappearance of the soldier.

Bitter, indeed, was his disappointment, though stricken with horror, when the soldier laid his dripping, emaciated, but still breathing burthen, gently on the grass.

It was the pretty little quadroon girl, Fanfan, reduced to a living skeleton. A few drops of rum and water were poured down her throat, and she soon showed slight signs of returning consciousness, and before long she was able to swallow a few crumbs of soaked bread. She had been slowly dying of starvation. The bodies

of three more female slaves were brought up successively, by the soldiers, and then they came to the bottom of the well, in which there was not four feet of water. These three were quite dead: but owing to some peculiar quality of the water, their bodies were not putrified.

The soldiers dug a hasty grave in the courtyard, and the bodies, and such of the others that could be moved, were collected by the soldiers, and deposited in the trench, and the earth thrown lightly over them, amidst many a bitter execration against those that had done these ruthless deeds.

All the rough kindnesses that the soldiers could bestow were lavished on the survivor; they formed a soft bed of leaves for her to repose on, and rolled up coats for her head, covering her carefully, to shelter her from the dew, which had now began to fall. She was conscious of what they were doing, but so feeble that she could only moan. An open clasp knife was found firmly clutched in her hand, and

when they removed it, a sort of faint smile flickered for a moment on her countenance ; but she immediately afterwards closed her eyes, and fell into a restless doze.

Arthur had stood perfectly silent, looking at the soldiers ; he saw them throw the earth on the mutilated corpses, and heard their curses, not loud, but deep, against the perpetrators of this wholesale murder ; and the thirst for vengeance was inflamed within him fearfully.

In the meantime, a party, under Sergeant Owens, had been busily tossing away the charred beams and timbers of the house. The rain had completely extinguished the smouldering embers, and cooled the ruins.

They found little underneath, for the intense fire had destroyed everything combustible, except in one small room, which being only attached to the main building by a narrow passage, had in some small degree escaped the devouring element. It had evidently caught fire several times, as the part that joined the house was

much scorched and burnt: the fire had run along the roof, and round the verandah. The floor was covered with charred shingles, and the boughs of a huge mangrove tree, that had overshadowed it, were withered and blackened by the flames, and the leaves far above were all shrivelled. The door, which had opened into the verandah, under its shade, was not burnt, but stood wide open.

Though the fire had spared the interior of the room, it was completely gutted of every article of furniture but one, and that one had an extraordinary effect on some of the soldiers when they first perceived it. It was a crucifix, and was untouched by the fire. Before it, partially covered by the charred shingles, lay two bodies prostrate on the floor. They had not perished by fire, for their clothes were merely scorched. Shot wounds and stabs, unseemly gashes, and horrid mutilations met the eyes of the soldiers as they lifted their corpses from the floor, both were old men, and both were of the same race as themselves.

If the rage of the soldiers was fierce when they discovered the murdered negroes, now at the sight of these two white men, stricken in years, so barbarously mangled, it kindled into a perfect fury. Several of them were Catholics, and they were doubly incensed, for it seemed as if the two old men had been murdered at the foot of the altar. They bore them out, laid them under the trees, and covered them over with plantain leaves.

The search was resumed, but they found no more traces of any human bodies.

This, then, was Rosalie's charming boudoir, and the mangled bodies those of her father and Marguerite's kind old uncle; but Marguerite and Rosalie, where were they? Of them there were no traces.

The tremendous rain and the trampling of the soldiers' feet had obliterated all marks about the entrance.

All this was reported to Arthur, who was still standing near the well. He followed Sergeant Owens almost mechanically to the spot

where the two bodies were lying under the trees. The sergeant removed the plantain leaves that covered their faces. The young officer recognised them in a moment, disfigured as they were.

His thirst for vengeance became a raging fever.

“Anything more, have you anything more to show me, sergeant?” he said in a subdued voice, almost in a whisper, as if he were afraid the corpses should hear it, though his eye flashed fire, and his pale face, usually so placid, had assumed an expression of sternness nearly ferocious.

“No, Sir, we have searched the ruins carefully, and we can find no other bodies. But see, Sir, these poor men have been murdered—savagely, brutally murdered;” and the sergeant paused as if waiting for some remark from his Captain.

“No women, sergeant, no women, white women I mean.”

“ No, Sir, there are no traces of any females.”

“ My God! what can have become of them?”

“ Here, Sir, this way, Sir, see what we have found,” said a soldier running up to Arthur.

“ What is it, Martin?”

“ We did not like to touch it till you came, Sir.”

Arthur followed the man across the lawn. What were his thoughts? what did he expect to find? Beyond the blooming hedge of Barbadoes pride, where the approach to the house from the northern parts of the island came winding up the steep and broken hill, the soldier stopped and showed Arthur what he had found. Several soldiers were congregated round it, and were debating on what it meant. It was an arrow fitted in a cleft-stick driven into the ground, with its head pointing down the path towards the sea. It was a short arrow formed of a reed tipped with copper, and feathered with a seagull's wing.

“ It's the same as them dark chaps carries in

a box on their backs," said one from the region of Cockney land.

"Hout, mon—dinna ye ken a it's just an arrie; but wha stickit it there?" replied one from north of the Tweed.

"Why doant thee call it by its roight name, Jock, you're as bad as the Lonnon chap; did'st thee never hear tell of bold Robin Hood?"

"Make way, here comes the Captain," cried one, and the soldiers drew back respectfully.

Arthur Conway examined it carefully. It was the same kind of arrow he had seen in the hands of the Carib Chief. In a moment he guessed the truth. The Caribs had been there, and this was their method of pointing out the direction they had taken.

Darkness however was rapidly stealing over the face of nature. In the tropics, when once the sun is below the horizon, even in the middle of summer, night follows closely on the steps of day. The gorgeous hues of evening, the glowing twilight, soon fade away into dim grey

shadows. They could do nothing till the morning.

In one of the farthest outbuildings, which was evidently a provision store for the slaves, the soldiers had discovered a barrel of salt pork, some heads of Indian corn, a few yams, and a keg of rum. There was plenty of rain water in the troughs. They kindled fires under the mangrove trees, and bivouacked round them, cooking their rashers on the embers. But no rough jokes, no merriment rang round the camp fires as of yore. There was a terrible meaning in that silence, foreshadowing what was to come. And the few muttered words were like the first big drops that precede the thunder-storm, falling gloomily and heavily.

Arthur wrapped himself in his cloak, and threw himself on the grass near the fire, worn out, weary, and nearly heart-broken. But for the newly-kindled spirit of vengeance, all his faculties must have yielded before the pressure of misfortune. That spirit of evil, subtle and

malignant, had crept into his heart, and nestled there.

Revenge had mastered Misery.

And yet he slept long and soundly, the sleep of utter oblivion. He was awakened by Sergeant Owens' bringing him a piece of roasted yam, and a rasher of pork, to break his fast.

"Sorry, Sir," said the sergeant, "but we couldn't get you anything better; the niggers have gutted everything."

Arthur started up. It was grey morning. He felt refreshed, but giddy and confused.

"Thank you, Owens, thank you," he said. "I cannot eat yet. How have the men passed the night?"

"Very well, Sir, They've had their breakfast, and are ready to start. Indeed, Sir, they are very impatient—I may say savage. I never saw the men take on so yet."

"They shall not be disappointed," said Arthur, gloomily, "if we can but track the murderers, Owens. Let them fall in."

“But won’t you eat anything, Sir?”

“No, no; by-and-by, perhaps; after —” and here he shuddered and turned pale, but shaking off, with a strong effort, his gloomy thoughts, he crossed the lawn to where the arrow rested in the cleft stick.

Telling the men to keep a good look-out, and taking the sergeant, who was a light, active man, keen, intelligent, and trustworthy, with him, he followed the track indicated by the arrow, until they came down nearly to La Maison Vide. Here the path divided, one branch leading straight to the sea, the other northwards. An arrow was discovered pointing in the latter direction. Without any hesitation, Arthur decided on following. For some miles there was no difficulty in keeping the track, for it wound amidst deep glens, whose abrupt cliffs were clothed with an impenetrable mass of tangled forest, but at last emerging from a portal of frowning rocks, a deep and considerable stream, with woody banks, covered with stunted mangroves and manchineals, ran before them.

As they were searching for a ford to cross the river, a man rose suddenly, as if out of the ground, and stood before the young officer. It was the Carib, called El Duque.

“The English Captain seeks the negroes. It is well. The Carib will lead him.”

“The English Captain is grateful,” replied Arthur. “He saw the arrow, and understood it. Are the murdering negroes far away?”

“They are well hidden, but the Carib’s eyes are keen. He can see far. The Carib has patience—he can wait. The negroes are swine, they leave a broad mark. See!” and El Duque led him to the stream, and then some distance up its bank.

“The stream was filled from the thunder-storm; they would not cross; they thought the rain would wash out their tracks; but the mangroves catch the water. The prints remain!”

“They are numerous, then,” said the young officer, examining the foot-prints of many men on the soft sand amidst the bushes.

The Carib looked at the soldiers before he replied, and then expressed, as well as he could, that the negroes were about the same number.

No European could possibly have followed the trail of the negroes through the maze of mangroves, over the forest-clad hills, through valley, ravine, and water-courses ; but the Carib tracked them with instinctive sagacity, like a Cuba bloodhound. The soldiers, encumbered with their arms, followed with great difficulty, but, animated with a fierce spirit of revenge, they pressed on gallantly, and kept up as well as they could.

Arthur and the Carib were a little in advance, and had gained the brow of a considerable hill, the crest of which was bare of shrubs, in comparison with the rest.

“ Hist !” said the Carib, suddenly.

“ What is it ?”

“ The Carib smells the drunken hogs. Look !”

A slender blue wreath of smoke, at a dis-

tance below them, was curling upwards into the still air. The negroes were in a deep dell, about fifty yards across, and a hundred in length; water had evidently once lodged there, for it was shaped like an oblong basin, with a dry water-course at both ends. The bed was carpetted with soft, green grass, dotted with a few shrubs, but the nearly perpendicular sides and edges were, as usual, clothed with vegetation, except where the water-course issued from it.

El Duque, beckoning to Arthur to follow his example, crept on his belly to the brink, and pushing aside the boughs, they beheld a scene such as few have witnessed.—A drunken orgie of runaway negroes. A whole ox was roasting at a huge fire, from which, ever and anon, the negroes cut half-raw slices, and thrust them into their huge mouths; bottles of wine and earthen jars were lying scattered about, mingled with costly articles of furniture. In one corner, horses and mules were tethered by the leg, in another, was lying a pile of arms, many of the

savages had dressed themselves in the most fantastic manner ; some had lady's bonnets on their heads, others had lace veils and coloured silk scarves and handkerchiefs twisted round their woolly scalps like turbans, gauze curtains, pieces of velvet, chintz hangings, silk and satin dresses were twined and festooned round their bodies, and hung over their shoulders. Some were knocking off the heads of the bottles and pouring sparkling champagne and old Madeira down their throats ; others had gold and silver goblets and vases to their mouths brimming with the most costly and precious wines ; some were yelling and shouting in a noisy state of intoxication ; others lay stupified and speechless on the ground ; one had placed a silver tureen on his head as a helmet ; another was cutting tobacco on a golden salver. The noise of their jabbering and discordant yelling, the reeking effluvium from the singed ox, and their foetid bodies, their frightful attitudes and contortions, their gluttony, their bestiality filled the scene

with horror and prevented any sense of the ludicrous from mingling with disgust.

These, then, were the plunderers, the burners of *La Belle Etoile*; these were they who had massacred its inmates: there could be no mistake, no doubt. The evidence was too apparent.

Now for retaliation, and vengeance. But Rosalie and Marguerite, where were they?

The sight of the goblets, the different articles of furniture, which he recognized, steeled Arthur's heart against mercy, his only fear was that one should escape. Sickened with the horrid scene, he withdrew gently with the Carib from the edge of the glen to where the soldiers were halted.

"Does the English Captain know the hawk's scream?" said the Carib in a low tone.

Arthur nodded his head.

"It is well. Will the Captain wait till he hears it?"

Arthur nodded again, he could hardly trust himself to speak.

"It is well," reiterated the Carib. Then going down the line, he touched about twenty of the soldiers, and expressed by signs that they were to come with him. The men looked to Arthur for his command. He beckoned to Sergeant Owens, and pointed to the men, and then to the Carib. The soldiers fell out noiselessly, and El Duque led them away by a circuitous path. The young officer again beckoned to a corporal, and whispered to him to go round and tell the men to load with as little noise as possible, one by one, to fix their bayonets, and keep silence. There was a deadly purport in that order, and the men understood it; and more than one observed, that they had never seen their young Captain look so before.

As soon as the men were ready, he led them gently down to where the watercourse issued from the glen, and motioned them to spread to the right and left, keeping ten men with him to occupy the narrow end. Presently some of the soldiers caught sight of the negroes,

and a low murmur of execration, that they could not entirely suppress, went round; but the orgie was at its height. The savage band heard not their coming fate. The soldiers' firelocks were cocked spontaneously, and their hands itched to pull the triggers, as each man picked out his mark: they could hardly wait for the word of command.

Suddenly, from the heights at the further end of the glen, a hawk screamed shrilly.

Some of the negroes started up, and rushed to their arms; some stared about in wild dismay, some jumped up, but fell down again, too drunk to stand, while a discordant yell arose on every side.

Hark! a ringing volley of musketry—another, one echoing the other. Down drop about a dozen, screaming, yelling fiends, ere the two echoes have died away.

Bewildered, stupified, they run hither and thither; some, not all, for about twenty have snatched up muskets, and are attempting to return the fire in the direction of the sounds.

Again! hark! the double volley. More yelling, more screaming. Down they go to earth. Another and another. The valley is becoming a shambles. Have the soldiers no pity? Has Arthur forgotten mercy? No! Hark! his clear voice rings above the din like a bugle call, as he gives the word to cease firing, and to close.

The men obeyed reluctantly at heart, but with a quick run.

“Follow me, and charge; but give quarter, and take prisoners; we have punished them enough.”

Then drawing his sword, and placing himself at the head of his men, he rushed up the watercourse.

Down, at the same moment, from the head of the glen, sprang Sergeant Owens and his party. “The cold steel! my fine fellows,” he cried; “don’t waste your powder on the murderous dogs.”

“Quarter,” cried Arthur, “give quarter.” And his voice echoed round.

The sound was scarcely out of his mouth, when a straggling bullet from the still resisting body of negroes struck him in the shoulder. He stumbled, and fell forwards on his face. He supported himself on his arm, as one of the men stooped to raise him, and said, faintly, "It is nothing;" but with a groan he fell back senseless and inanimate. The soldier who had stopped to pick him up dropped by his side with a bullet through his brain.

A cry went forth from the soldiers, a fierce cry of rage, when they saw their gallant young Captain fall. That cry was the negroes' knell.

On rushed the two waves of men meeting at a point, forcing in their resistless sweep, the armed negroes against the steep side of the the glen. The bayonets flashed brightly, but in a moment they were dim with blood. Another soldier fell mortally wounded, another dead. But the negroes had no chance; badly armed, and taken by surprise; out-numbered

by men who knew how to use their weapons, infuriated and exasperated.

Still they behaved manfully. No quarter was given, or asked. They perished where they stood, each one with his arms in his hand fighting to the last. It is probable, that a few of them escaped into the bush, though nothing more was heard of them afterwards. By this act of severity, and the defeat of the republicans, the rebellion was suppressed for a time to break out again in '98 with different results.

CHAPTER XI.

THE 27th of July.—Again the middle ground. In the dim moonlight, moving to and fro, are many dusky forms. Three men are standing apart, conversing eagerly; one of gigantic mould, armed to the teeth—the mulatto, Lemantin; the other two, what a contrast!—the thin, pale, stooping Jesuit, and the dusky Antinous—a young quadroon, with purple eyes, curly jet-black hair, straight nose, and pearly teeth, handsome as the demigod, and soulless as the marble.

“See, the stars are waning fast, the day will soon break, and he is not returned,” said the

mulatto, impatiently. "What, in the devil's name, made you send a decrepid old nigger on such an errand?"

"Nobody would take old Pierrot for a spy, Lemantin," replied Marinier, quietly. "Something must have happened, or he would have been back before this. Perhaps it is a false alarm, after all, and the republican troops have not landed."

"True or false," said the mulatto, grinding his teeth together, fiercely, "I will wait no longer. Let the wolves fight it out or not, as they please. Lemantin is no longer the cur waiting for the bone. See, old man, I have got my pack about me, ready and willing for the work. I will hunt for myself. Once they have tasted blood, they are mine for ever. Let us on, then. Why should we delay?"

"I do not wish to detain you," replied the Jesuit, slowly; "but you will keep your compact with me, will you not? I cannot appear in this business; I am a man of peace."

“*Tonnerre de Dieu !* have I not given you my word already? Do you think that I break it, like you white hypocrites?”

“No, no, it is not that, but —” said the Jesuit, hesitatingly.

“Speak out!” cried the mulatto, fiercely.

“Do you think you will have power to control your men, when their blood is inflamed with rapine and plunder? If the lily is bruised, she is worthless.”

“Ho! ho!” laughed the savage, “I understand your fears. Trouble yourself not. I will bear her pure and spotless to your arms. Antoine here knows the rendezvous in the mountains; he will guide you there. I will make short work of it where I am going, and will not be long after you. Do you have everything ready. But mind, I swear to you, I, Lemantin, that I will have but little of the mummery for myself. If the dark-haired one refuses it as a sacrament, she shall have it as a horse is physicked, whether she will or no. The other I do not interfere with.”

“ Oh, Antoine knows the happiness in store for him ; a pretty, blushing, blue-eyed bride, fair and fragrant as a lime-blossom,” said the Jesuit, turning to the dusky Antinous.

The handsome quadroon smacked his lips and rolled his eyes, but did not speak.

“ So, after all, you are not going to marry her yourself?” said the mulatto, laughing.

“ No, no, Antoine ; here is my substitute.”

“ I don’t understand what you would be at ; but as I have said, so will I do,” replied Lemantin, shrugging his shoulders. “ Hark ! hark ! there is a shot—another, another. They are attacking the pass. Here, follow me, my dogs,” said the mulatto, springing away, but for a moment, as if a sudden thought had struck him, he turned round, and, casting a withering, threatening glance at the Jesuit, he muttered between his set teeth : “ Treacherous dog ! Fool that I was to trust a white man !” Then, calling to two of his followers, he ordered them, in a tongue unknown to the Jesuit, to keep the white man prisoner, until his return.

Marinier understood the action, but did not attempt to expostulate: he was himself alarmed. Had any one betrayed them? Had any one discovered the plot? The Carib—old Pierrot—if it failed, it would go hard with him. The mulatto's blood was up. He had aroused the innate ferocity of the beast—would it turn upon him, and rend him?

The firing suddenly ceased, and the mulatto stopped.

A negro came rushing up the ravine.

“What is it, Sully,” cried Lemantin, aloud.

“Bah, it is noting, mon General,” replied in broken English the panting man, with a rough salute. “Trois Caraïbes, four vat dey call militia, and one buckra sodger, dat all—we shot um down, dey run away, tree kill.”

“Are you quite sure they were militia men, Sully?”

“Ees, Massa, dey run away quite too soon for buckra sodgers, besides him all dress in white.”

“ Did you take any prisoners ? ”

“ No, General ; mash um kulls, all gone dead.”

The rebel Chief, for so we may now call him, reflected a moment, and then said :

“ That will do, Sully, go back and tell Captain Meunier to draw off his men in a quarter of an hour, and march towards La Belle Etoile.”

The negro giving a rough salute disappeared.

“ Ha ! this speaks for itself,” muttered the mulatto, with a grim smile. “ The troops have marched to meet the Frenchmen, and they could spare but eight—curses on them : may they cut one another’s throats, the pale-faced curs. Come, these eight are disposed of, the coast is clear, and the proud Rosalie is mine.”

“ Well, brother,” he said aloud, turning to Marinier and holding out his big hand, yet showing his huge white teeth with a fiendish grin, “ there is no treachery in this, after all—shake hands, brother.”

Marinier did as he was desired, at the same

time fixing his keen eyes on the mulatto, he said :

“ Why did you suspect me, brother ? ”

“ *Diantre!* I suspect you above all men, what could have put that into your head ? ”

“ You looked just now as if you could have eaten me.”

“ Bah, it was but a passing cloud—old Pierrot has not returned. I did not know what the firing was about, and I was afraid for the moment that our plans were discovered ; but it’s all right I tell you.”

“ What was the alarm, then ? why did they make such a noise ? the quieter these things are done the better.”

“ It was a foolish attempt of a few men who attempted to force the pass, intending no doubt to act as garrison to La Belle Etoile during the boy’s absence ; do you understand ? ”

“ And the issue.”

“ All shot down, or run away.”

“ Were there any Caribs amongst them ? ” asked Marinier, anxiously.

The mulatto's sleepy eye flashed fire, and a deep black shadow seemed to pass over his swarthy countenance as he turned away with a fearful oath, without replying to the Jesuit's question.

* * * * *

Three hours after this, the smooth lawn in front of La Belle Etoile was trodden down and polluted by a throng of incarnate fiends, inflamed with bad passions, and furious for blood.

The helpless and unsuspecting inmates were busily employed in their usual avocations.

The slaves were not in the fields, but were scattered about the farm and outbuildings, drawing water, grinding corn, or tending the cattle.

Rosalie and Marguerite had risen early—it was an anxious day to both of them, and sleep had forsaken them before the usual time. They

went hand in hand to pay their orisons before the beautiful shrine in Rosalie's boudoir.

Both their hearts were touched with sadness ; yet even that had its consolation, for it linked and united them in stronger bonds of sisterhood.

Picture to yourself, kind reader, these two fair beings adorned with every grace and beauty, radiant with youth and purity, differing only as the loveliest flowers, the brightest gems, or two fair stars, kneeling together, side by side, sisters in all, save blood, each supplicating at that ornamented shrine the intercession of the Virgin of grace before the throne of heaven, each for him each loved. The dark, lustrous eyes of one are upturned to heaven beseechingly—her head thrown back, her lips gently parted, her bosom heaving with convulsive sobs. The other, with her soft, blue eyes humbly bent upon the ground, the long, silky eyelashes casting a shadow on her fair, smooth cheek, while from underneath comes creeping gently

a single tear. Their white hands clasped together, their kneeling attitude, their whole expression was beautiful and pure and holy, and peering at them through the half-closed jealousies, like a furious satyr, stands the mulatto Lemantin.

Rosalie and her sister arose from their kneeling posture and kissed one another tenderly.

The mulatto passed round to the outer door of the boudoir, followed by a tall, athletic negro.

"Hark," said Marguerite, hastily, "surely I heard footsteps outside, and there, look, is the shadow of a man passing the window."

"Fancy, dearest, it must be fancy: the slaves are not allowed to go by this end of the house," replied Rosalie, laughing.

"No, no," cried Marguerite, in alarm. "Hark! what is that?"

Suddenly, around the house, and in the house, there arose an infernal uproar. Shrieks,

yells, cries, the rattling of fire-arms, the crashing of wood, the bursting open of doors, hurried footsteps, heart-rending ear-piercing screams, hellish shouts, as if the very fiends had broken loose. The door leading into the body of the house is opened suddenly—but it is not shut again—there is no time.

Faint, and ghastly pale, old Devrien, with his dressing-gown, all dabbled with blood, that spurted from a wound in his side, tottered into the room,

“Fly, dear ones—fly! while there is yet time!” he murmured, in a low, gasping voice pressing his hand to his side. “The negroes have risen! Oh, my God! Mercy—mercy! Spare them! Fly!—fly!”

He could say no more, but, staggering forwards, he fell senseless at the foot of the crucifix.

Pale as death, Rosalie ran to raise her father, but a scream from Marguerite stopped her. Hideous fiends, grinning and yelling, were thronging into the room.

Instinctively they turned to fly by the door that opened out beneath the gigantic mangrove-trees.

They reached the threshold. There stood the mulatto, Lemantin.

Rosalie started back, horror-stricken.

Fearfully the truth flashed upon her, and scorched her brain. Lost—lost !

“The mulatto—the mulatto !” she shrieked, wildly, and fell fainting forwards. He caught her in his arms.

At the same moment, a powerful negro seized the no less terrified Marguerite, and, despite her cries and struggles, bore her off like a child.

We will not lift up the dismal shroud of hideous horrors that enveloped La Belle Etoile on that fatal morning.

They who have read an account of the Maroon wars may easily conceive them, and to those who have not, the scenes that the soldiers witnessed in the last chapter may furnish some idea of the fate that awaited alike master and slave,

young and old, things animate and inanimate.

Rapine and murder, fire and reckless destruction, plunder, wanton cruelty, and hideous drunkenness had a fearful orgie, and this not under the excitement of a resistance—for resistance there was none. Pshaw! the blood runs cold, and the senses sicken at the very thought. Our business is with those that still live. Let us then follow them.

Beneath the gnarled, wide-spreading branches of the mangrove trees, apart from the plunderers, stood five picked followers of the rebel chief. They were unarmed, and held by the bridles two mules, ready saddled. The mulatto and the negro, bearing their lovely burdens, soon joined this party, but kept the maidens separate.

Rosalie was still senseless, or appeared to be so; but Marguerite shuddered when she was placed on the ground. On this very spot, beneath the sheltering branches of that grim old tree, but the day before, she had reclined trustfully on

the bosom of him she loved with her maiden love. 'Twas there the Carib Chief stood—'twas there they had parted. And now ! Yet this was but a passing thought. She collected her wandering senses, and prayed silently to heaven for aid.

She was puzzled at the conduct and demeanour of these men. Could it be their intention to rescue and preserve them ? She had not understood, or, perhaps, had not heard Rosalie's exclamation at the sight of the mulatto. She looked at them all in turns, to see if she could recognise any of their faces. But no ; they were all perfect strangers to her. What would they do next ? As yet, she knew not what to think, or how to act.

She was not kept long in suspense, for the same negro who had carried her off again approached her, and said, in very good French :

“Mademoiselle must allow herself to be blindfolded.”

“Oh, no ! pray do not do so !” she replied,

beseechingly. "Let me have at least the light of day. Do not blind my eyes!"

"It must be done: the chief has ordered it," replied the negro, firmly, but respectfully.

"Which is your chief? Oh! let me speak to him."

"*Le voilà*," said the negro, pointing to the gigantic mulatto.

"What are you about there, Meunier?" shouted the deep voice of Lemantin. "Do as I have ordered you at once, and put her on the mule."

"You see your request is impossible, Mademoiselle," said the negro, politely. "You must submit." Marguerite permitted herself quietly to be blindfolded.

As soon as the handkerchief was passed over her eyes and fastened, she felt herself lifted on the mule. The reins were put into her hands, and they moved off.

Once more the parting from her dear Arthur crossed her mind. Again it was banished, and she listened attentively to catch all words or

sounds that might assist her in conjecturing their fate. Alas! she could but hear the discordant yells of the now drunken fiends—the dismal screams of the despairing women—the crackling and roaring of the devouring flames—and the shrill cries of animals in extreme torture. Gradually they died away, and she knew by the noiseless tread of the mule that she was passing over the savannah of Guinea grass behind the farm. Then they began to ascend steep hills, threading the tangled forest. Several times the mule stumbled, and she nearly fell, but she found herself supported by vigorous arms. Several times she was lifted from her saddle, and carried by men up some steep hill side, or across some rocky ravine, or foaming mountain torrent. Many times the leaves and twigs of the overhanging boughs and trailing creepers would brush against her face, and repeatedly a voice cried “Stoop!” but no other word was spoken, except occasionally a muttered oath.

Their progress, however, as may be sup-

posed, was very slow ; to poor Marguerite it seemed an age. A weary—weary ride it was to her, in the possession of all her senses. Of Rosalie's feelings we know nothing, for she remembered nothing of this journey.

* * * * *

“ Here we are at last,” suddenly cried out the ferocious Lemantin.

The mules stopped, and the exhausted and frightened maidens were lifted off their backs, and placed on the soft and mossy ground.

Rosalie's courage had completely failed her ; she was almost deprived of sense, and yet she trembled violently, and could scarcely stand, but Marguerite still had hope ; her faith was so pure, her trust so entire, that she almost looked for a special intervention of Providence to rescue them from the impending danger. What that danger was, her maiden heart would not, could not imagine. Death was in her thoughts ; it was terrible for one so young, so lovely, to die ;

but her soul was at peace with God, she dreamed not of dishonour. The bandages were removed from their eyes. Rosalie uttered a faint scream, and sank senseless on the ground.

Marguerite was at first bewildered by the sudden glare of the bright day; but soon, though pale as death, and quivering like an aspen leaf, she looked steadily round, as if to gather in by one glance the whole scene.

All was mystery.

Then she sat down, and raising the drooping head of the lovely creole, chafed her temples, and tried every means to bring her back to life.

The scene was, indeed, a strange one; although to any but the actors in this painful drama, the spot chosen by Lemantin for the fulfilment of his dark designs was a tropical gem of the purest water.

About twelve feet apart, there stood two stately grougrou palm-trees, casting their waving tresses loosely into the fragrant air. Sheltered

and protected by their singular position, they had withstood for many years the awful power of the devastating hurricanes, and grown tall, straight, and tapering, until they had by far out-topped their brethren of the forest.

A little retired, but still between the two palm trees, so that their trunks appeared to rise as columns on each side, there was a rock, somewhat like a dais, with a projecting canopy. The face was smooth, and two ledges or steps, one above the other, stood out from it, the lowest resting on the ground. It was of dark-green porphyry, polished by nature or the action of water. The brow was slightly overhanging, and clothed with trailing creepers, twined and matted together.

A deep, dark shadow fell from this rock upon the emerald-green turf, whilst the still-slanting sun rays played and coquetted with the feathery foliage of the lofty palm-trees, which, as it swayed about in the light air, threw alternate lights and shades on the richly-coloured trunks.

On one side, a jet of pure, cold, limpid water gushed forth impetuously from a narrow cleft in the bosom of the hard rock, which, falling into a rounded basin, filled it constantly to overflowing. At first, a trickling rill stealing through the moss—then forming a water-course as the ground sloped gently away, it ran, bubbling and sparkling, over rounded and glossy stones, for a little distance, when suddenly it was lost amidst a brake of lofty rushes, canes, and waving reeds.

Behind the screen of water-plants which faced the rock, might be dimly seen the peak of one of the highest mountains ~~of~~ the central group, on which there rested a light gaudy-like cloud surrounded with rays of gold, while a mazarine blue haze spread veil-like along its sides. To the left, backed by the dense and impenetrable forest, there was a mass of brilliant vegetation, amidst which the tree-ferns shone conspicuously. The grass-plot on which the palm-trees stood, might measure some twenty or thirty square yards.

Grouped round the two maidens, but at a little distance from them, were Lemantin and his savage companions. Upon the second ledge of the rock there was erected a rude cross of wood. A white man in the garb of a priest knelt on the lowest step. By his side stood, in the natural and graceful attitude of a savage, a handsome young quadroon. God-like as he looked he did but suck a piece of sugar-cane.

When the party arrived the man in the dress of a priest arose, and making a sign to the mulatto he walked up to the two maidens, and said in a low voice :

“ Daughter !”

Marguerite looked up, and to her great surprise she beheld a white man in a priest's robe, gazing compassionately on them. A fresh ray of hope, like a rosy sunbeam, gleamed upon her and warmed her sinking heart.

“ Are you come to save us ?” she murmured, in a gentle voice.

The man shook his head sorrowfully, and replied :

“ Alas ! I am but a prisoner, like yourselves, to these lawless men.”

“ What do they want ? why have they brought us here ? what means that rude altar ? and you, why are you in the garb of a minister of our holy religion ? ” said Marguerite with rapid utterance.

“ It is evident that these men must have arranged it all beforehand, and they carried me forcibly off in my priest’s dress to perform the ceremony.”

“ What ceremony ? I do not understand you,” cried the bewildered girl.

“ The sacrament of marriage, my daughter,” replied the priest, slowly

“ But the bridegrooms, where are they ? ”

“ There and there,” answered the man, pointing to Lemantin and the young quad-room.

“ And the brides ?”

“ Yourself and Rosalie Devrien.”

A deep, burning blush overspread the maiden's face, as in a moment the purport of his words rent the veil of innocence that had hitherto enveloped her young heart. She did not, however, shrink from her terrible task, nor did her powers of observation desert her.

“ You know us, then ?” she said, quickly.

“ I have seen you but once before,” replied the priest, while a strange sort of smile for a moment flickered round his thin pale lips.

“ You know we are wealthy—will they not take a ransom for us? We will give all we possess—ay, and more ”—and here she blushed again, for she thought of Arthur—“ if they will let us go free.”

“ See, here is a purse of gold,” said Rosalie, looking up for the first time; “ and here are jewels, and bracelets, and — ”

“I fear it is vain,” replied the priest, interrupting her. “Ambition, not avarice, prompts these men, or they would have shared in the plunder of La Belle Etoile.”

Marguerite looked at the priest attentively, when he had said this; a faint glimmering of suspicion stealing almost imperceptibly upon her.

“You have heard, then —” she paused, and burst into tears.

Marinier saw his mistake, and hastened to rectify it. “Alas! I could not help hearing it. The men who brought me hither did nothing but talk of it. They spoke in French, certainly, and did not reflect that I am a Frenchman.”

“But, surely,” said Marguerite, quickly, “if you are a father of our Holy Church, as you profess to be, you will speak to these horrid men, and save us.”

“It will be of little avail, my daughter, for

me to speak to them; at least, I fear so, for I am a prisoner in their hands, like yourselves."

"Your profession is sacred. Savages as they are, they will listen to you."

"Try, father; in the name of the Virgin of Grace, I implore you, try," said Rosalie, faintly.

The priest shook his head, sorrowfully; but he quitted them, and went over to Lemantin, who was standing a little apart, grinning like a fiend.

"Well," said the mulatto, abruptly, "do they consent, or must the dose be forced upon them?"

"They have not consented, Lemantin; but I have not yet had time to convince them of the necessity of compliance. They have maidens' scruples to be overcome, and they scarcely know the alternative."

"Your blood is cold, Marinier; mine is boiling like wildfire in my veins. I tell you I can wait but little longer."

“ You must have a little patience, Lemantin. The dark-eyed one—your girl, I mean—has only just recovered from her fainting-fit. I tell you, she will not be able to bear another shock so soon.”

The mulatto looked savage.

“ I speak for your benefit, Lemantin,” continued Marinier. “ For my part, I care not how soon the proud creole becomes your wife. It is with the fair-haired one I have to deal, and half the battle is lost to me if force is to be used.”

“ Look you,” replied the mulatto, interrupting him, “ the shadows still fall from the rocks, towards the west ; but in a short time there will be no shadow, and then— You understand me ? ”

“ Carry her off then, Lemantin, to the rendezvous, and leave the other to me.”

“ I do not pretend to understand what you would be at, with your snake-like subtlety,”

said the mulatto, contemptuously. "To your work; the shadows are fast shortening."

Lemantin walked backwards and forwards, like a wild beast in his cage waiting for its food, impatiently, savagely, grinding his teeth, and knitting his brows together.

Marinier returned to the weeping maidens. "I cannot save you," said he, mournfully; "my efforts have been all in vain. I promised them a vast ransom to tempt their cupidity; I pointed out the heinous sin they were committing; I told the Chief you would die, if he persisted in his cruel determination; but it was in vain."

The maidens shuddered.

"All I could gain for you," he continued, in a soft, insinuating voice, "was a short delay, and a promise not to use any violence, if it can possibly be avoided."

"There is some object in this," said Marguerite, quickly.

“ Yes, if I understand them rightly, it is this,” replied Marinier, in the same soft voice : “ these men are far above their brethren in education and intellect ; they have lately heard the doctrine preached, that all men are born, and should be, equal. Now, they are wise enough to see the fallacy of this, in their present state. They know that no coloured men have ever acquired the intellects and knowledge of white men, as a body—they know this, and they feel it deeply. They are out of the pale of society ; they cannot aspire to the hands of the daughters of their masters and superiors : they would remedy this. These men, then, avoiding the horrors and atrocities of their inferior brethren, have carried you safely off from certain death, and more certain outrage, to elevate themselves by marriage, and to raise up children to succeed them, who shall not be disgraced and branded as inferior beings. This, as far as I can make it out, has been their object, both in preserving you from a dreadful

fate, and of bringing me here by force, to perform the holy sacrament."

Marguerite listened attentively. Her faint suspicion became a strong doubt. She looked at him keenly, and said: "Surely you can and will refuse to perform so holy a rite; and that will gain us time, at least if their intentions be such as you say they are."

"If I refuse, they will kill me."

"And is it not better to die," said Marguerite, solemnly, "than to commit so deadly a sin?"

"Nay, my daughter, our life is not our own; we hold it as a tenure from God. He must release us, not we ourselves. No situation, however painful or distressing, can excuse suicide in His eyes."

"You, then, would have us rather marry these men than die? Oh, shame! shame! to linger on, under the binding of a sacred oath, linked like a galley-slave to a fierce and cruel savage—a negro!" Here a convulsive shudder

passed over her. "Sooner welcome death, in his most hideous shape!"

"Nay, my daughter, you are hasty; no oath is binding that is taken under the fear of death. In a short time, you may be free, and get absolution from your vow. By this, you have a chance of escape; otherwise, without a miracle, there is none."

"And in the meantime?" added Marguerite, shuddering again.

Ere the Jesuit could reply, the sun was in the meridian.

"No more of this mummary, Marinier," shouted the mulatto, savagely. "How long are you to stand prating there?"

As Lemantin pronounced the name "Marinier," the hearts of the forlorn maidens finally sank within them; the last faint glimmering of hope seemed suddenly and irrevocably darkened now and for ever! They looked at one another: all was agony and miserable despair.

"It is *his* enemy," murmured Marguerite.

Then kissing the scarcely-conscious Rosalie, she said: " Sister, dear sister, farewell. We shall meet in heaven, ere long. Let us forgive our enemies: let us pray."

" O, Marguerite! this is very terrible. Is there no hope?"

" On earth, none. O, Arthur! Arthur!"

And they knelt together, side by side, and prayed.

The last second of the reprieve has passed; the shadows are falling towards the east. Inflamed with passion, furious at the delay, with burning eyes and heaving chest, the gigantic mulatto sprang forwards to seize upon his beautiful and helpless victim.

Rosalie saw him. With superhuman energy, she arose, and, with a piercing shriek, darted forwards towards the screen of water-plants, in a vain attempt to fly. Soon her limbs failed her, and she sank to the earth.

With a curse, the mulatto turned, and sprang after her with rapid bounds.

He has almost reached her.

Hark !

Through the still calm air, there comes a swift, low, rustling, hurtling sound.

With a hoarse, terrible scream, the gigantic mulatto bounded full four feet into the air, and fell forwards on his face close to the feet of the shrinking girl.

It seemed as if the avenging hand had indeed been stretched out to strike him with the bolt of heaven. So suddenly passed he away, that there was no perceptible interval 'twixt life and death.

Marguerite, who had risen again, fell on her knees before the altar. She could but murmur :
“ Saved ! saved ! saved ! ”

The young quadroon, and the others, ran simultaneously to raise the fallen giant. A yell, a fiendish shriek, burst from every throat as they discovered the cause of his death.

An arrow, feathered with a quill from the wing of a white seamew, had pierced his right eye, and entered the brain.

They let the body fall.

Again arose the yell of terror.

The Caribs ! the Caribs !

They stood irresolute.

A hawk screamed shrilly.

Then one by one, the negroes, the mulattoes, the quadroon, dropped down, some pierced with many arrows, some with the deadly bullets.

There was a strange sound, a commotion in the air, it seemed alive with missiles, whilst from every side the echoes from the deadly muskets pealed a death knell to the wretched negroes.

Like a ship in the vortex of a hurricane, they were hurled hither and thither. They could not escape, for around them was drawn a circle of death.

Wherever they attempted to fly, there they were met with the arrow or the bullet.

But not until the last negro was stretched, quivering and bleeding, on the mossy ground, did any of the death-dealers show them-

selves, and then, a single, half-naked, but graceful figure, with a bow in his hand, and an arrow fitted to the string, walked slowly and gravely from amidst the canes; and passing through the slain, without moving his eyes to the right or left, but carefully avoiding the corpses, so as not even to brush them with his feet, he went up to Marinier, who, though unhurt, stood motionless and petrified (indeed, he seemed rooted to the ground), and placing his hand on the Jesuit's shoulder, he said, in a firm and somewhat menacing tone: "My brother must not leave this, or Le Baron will tell his Caribs that Marinier is an enemy."

Marinier answered, moodily and sulkily:

"Kill me at once, Carib; life is no longer valuable to me. My scheme has failed, and I am lost. Better die by your hands, than be hanged like a dog, with my enemy triumphing over me."

The Carib Chief replied, gravely:

"Marinier belongs to the English Captain. Le

Baron will keep him safely. Marinier must not die."

"Maledictions on you," muttered the priest, savagely. "Foiled! foiled, not once, but again, by this miserable savage. What an accursed fatality!"

But this mood did not continue long; quickly banishing the idea of death, he began to reflect.

A sudden light beamed in his eyes, a slight colour tinged his pale cheeks, and he muttered to himself these words: "One more cast of the dice. I will stake all upon the throw. It is a good thought—a last chance, but a favourable one." Then speaking aloud, he said: "You need not bind me, Carib. I will go as your prisoner willingly. I am sick of these scenes of bloodshed."

CHAPTER XII.

WHEN Le Blanc recovered his senses, he found himself in a comfortable bed, with mosquito curtains drawn round. His wounds had been washed and dressed, and owing probably to the exhaustion occasioned by loss of blood and want of food, no fever had supervened. With the exception of one arm, which he felt was helpless, and which gave him a little pain, in every other respect he was sensible that he had received no serious injury to his person, though, on first awakening, he was sorely puzzled to know where he had got to. The fresh trade-

wind came sighing through the waving plantain leaves, bearing on its wings the perfume of lime and orange blossoms ; and the dash of sounding billows, mingled with the flapping of leaves against the closed jalousies, perplexed him more and more.

Ripe fruit and cooling drinks stood on a table by his bedside. The sheets were of snowy whiteness ; the curtains, of the finest gauze. Everything bespoke luxury and civilization.

The pain in his arm, however, convinced him that all was real ; that what he saw and felt was not the effect of disordered senses. " Where am I ?" he said aloud.

" Did your honour call ?" answered the voice of our friend, Tom Connolly, from the verandah ; where he had been enjoying a quiet pipe, watching the lizards catching the unsuspecting flies, without a care or a thought of the future ; but rising at the call, and entering the chamber.

" Does your honour want anything ? I'm

ordered to get you what your honour wishes for," said the soldier, with a salute.

"Where am I, my good fellow?" said Le Blanc, faintly.

"In a house—devil the less, with a good roof over your head, begging your honour's pardon, if I make too free," replied Tom Connolly, "with lashins of drink, and nothing to pay."

"But what house am I in?"

"Devil a know I know, your honour, barring that you're kindly welcome. They're dacent people, and don't stint a boy in his drink; but if your honour'll wait a bit, I'll find out," and the kind-hearted Irishman rushed out of the room.

"Ah! I remember all now," murmured Le Blanc. "Defeated, betrayed, a prisoner on parole, deprived of liberty, deceived on every side, disappointed of the promised reinforcements, cheated by the settlers, cheated by the negroes, cheated by the Caribs; how shall I

face Victor Hugues again?" He cursed his folly for having embarked in such an enterprise; it was a miserable failure, and would lower him further in Rosalie's estimation. First, planning and plotting with all sorts of horrible wretches; then, betrayed by his associates, and disgracefully defeated. Then, gradually he began to remember his short interview with Arthur Conway, and how the young officer had expressed a terrible doubt of the safety of his mistress. "Had old Pierrot, too, betrayed him?" Never before had he felt the depth of his love for Rosalie. Then the promise he had made cast a bright ray on his gloomy situation.

His reverie was interrupted by the return of the Irish soldier.

"It's a fine place intirely, and has a grand name; the negroes call it the Carse of Gowrie, and the Master is one Mr. Gordon," said Tom.

"Is Mr. Gordon at home, did you hear? I should like to speak to him."

“The Master’s beyant, your honour, with the purty young lady, the colleen dhas, with the sweet blue eyes, that the Captain, God bless him ! is so sweet on, and a purtier couple never stood before the altar ; shure, didn’t I see here onst the darling, recaving the blessed Sacriment like an angel—as she is.”

The young Frenchman, though he could not quite understand Tom Connolly’s speech, gathered from it, that Mr. Gordon and his niece were on the other side of the island, probably at La Belle Etoile. He began to grow impatient, and inquired of the soldier where Arthur was.

“The Captain’s gone, your honour, since yesterday,” replied the Irishman ; “but there’s a party left to take care of the wounded. There’s a horse, and Tom Connolly ready, when your honour is well enough, to cross the mountains.”

“Why, my fine fellow, you seem altogether to forget that I am a prisoner of war ?”

“Shure, you’re the Captain’s friend.”

“But I have only just now been his mortal enemy.”

“Well, your honour, I suppose it’s the same as in Tipperary. Boys meet boys ; there’s a bit of trailing the cotamores ; the alpeens are out in a twinkling. Hurrooh ! a bloody sponce or two ; then, your honour, it’s all right again, a fair fight, and no malice.”

“And this is one of the men they wanted to seduce from their loyalty ! I wonder whether they are all like him,” thought the young Republican, aroused for a moment. But he soon became impatient again, and attempted to rise.

“Your honour is wake as wather. Won’t to-morrow do ? The Captain’s gone to look after the ladies. Shure, I heard the docther say so ; so, your honour, there’s no occasion to tire yourself. Lie still ; take some dhrink, and some soft meat, and I’ll call your honour before the sun is up, and we’ll have a pleasant ride into the town.”

Tom Connolly's advice was good. Anxious as he was to get tidings of his lovely mistress, he felt, that in his weak state, he could do no good if Rosalie were in a perilous position. That there was danger, he had gathered from Arthur's words and manner during their brief interview; but he trusted that all would be well.

Tom Connolly was right. François was, indeed, very weak. Dallas again visited him, and confirmed what the soldier had said.

Perfect quiet was enjoined on the young Frenchman, and to ensure it, a strong opiate was administered by the kind surgeon. His sleep was long and refreshing, yet, when he awoke, he had an indistinct consciousness, that a beautiful female form had been standing by his bed, that a sweet and well-known voice had murmured his name repeatedly in soft and tender accents.

The effects of the anodyne had scarcely

ceased, and there remained a dreamy languor not wholly unpleasing to the senses, but confusing to the ideas.

Surely, there are moments when the most hardened, the most worldly, heart catches some stray gleams of the pure and beautiful. Some through the medium of their senses, unusually gratified, are suddenly startled into a faint glimpse of their reality, and for them there is hope. But when flickering, like the waving streaks of the northern lights, they flash in the fever dreams of night fitfully, inconstantly, and no one knoweth from whence they come, or whither they go, then is hope doubtful, for the morn dawneth, and the dreams are forgotten.

The young Frenchman's mind was singularly constituted. In the midst of irreligion, atheism, blood-guiltiness, fierce passions, war, and tumult, the image of the pure and beautiful, reflected from his youthful fancy, had never completely deserted him; and now

it had simply and singly taken the form of Rosalie.

Thus, when he awoke, and strove to collect his fevered visions into some order, he fancied that an angel had stood by his bedside, inviting him in gentle accents, to fairer regions of peace and happiness.

But the angel had the eyes, and hair, and voice of Rosalie.

“Connolly.”

“Coming, yer honour,” said Tom, again entering the room. He had, indeed, been waiting at the door for some time, with a curious, but not unintelligent, grin on his broad, good-humoured countenance.

“Is that you, Tom?”

“It’s meself, Sir. Is yourself quite asy, Sir, after your long sleep?”

“Have I slept long, then?”

“Is it long?—bedad, thin, them hours were like Irish miles; it took yer honour a power of sleep to git over them.”

“ Oh, I remember, the doctor gave me opium ; yet I feel much stronger, and I think I shall be able to start to-morrow.”

“ And sure, Captain, this is to-morrow, and the breakfast bugle’s blown.”

“ Do you mean to say that a night has passed, without my knowing it ?”

“ Shure, Mr. Dallas is a conjuror, Captain ; but it’s as thrue as if St. Pater had tould it. I hope your honour had some purty drhames.”

“ Has—has there been any one here but yourself—in the room, I mean—whilst I was asleep ?”

“ I’ll tell ye the truth, Sir—there was.”

“ Was it man or woman, Tom ?”

“ It wore neither, your honour ; it wore the docther,” replied Connolly, the grin growing broader and broader.

“ Bah !” said François, impatiently ; “ only the surgeon. What strange phantasies opium conjures up ! What strange fancies it puts into the head ! I could almost swear that she was

standing by me, or an angel in her likeness." This, though spoken aloud, was said "apart."

"Begging your honour's pardon, if I make too free," continued the soldier, "I did not say it wore the surgeon. It wore the docther."

"Was it not Mr. Dallas, then?"

"I won't tell your honour a lie. It was not him, at all, at all," replied Connolly, gravely, but with a twinkle of his roguish eye: "it wore a docther in petticoats."

"One of the black nurses, then, I suppose; they are famous bedside watchers."

"Them sort don't wear much petticoats, I'm thinking," said Tom, demurely.

"What do you mean?" cried Le Blanc, his whole expression suddenly brightening.

"Will your honour be good enough to look at the little finger of your right hand?"

The beautiful tracery of the blue veins shone through the pale, smooth skin of his thin, fair hands, so lately stained with blood and dirt, as he raised them to his eyes. Though the room

was darkened, a diamond sparkled where, but the day before, there had been none.

“By heavens!” he exclaimed—he did not swear any longer by liberty—“the fairies or the genii have been at work. Am I, like the Princess of China, to be cured at the sight of a ring? Tell me, my good fellow, was it Mhaimonne who put that ring on my finger?”

“Anan—is it Latin your honour’s speaking?” replied Connolly, with a vacant stare. You would have thought him as innocent as a dove.

“Devil take the fellow! Can’t you tell me how it came here?”

“Sure it wore the docther, and the docther said as how it would cure yer honour entirely, if you would look at it.”

Le Blanc again raised it to his eyes, and now he knew it. Once this ring had encircled the taper finger of a hand whose very touch sent his wild blood circling through his veins. He saw the truth. Rosalie, his Rosalie was safe,

and actually under the same roof. What joy filled his heart; yet he was humbled and dejected by defeat and disgrace, softened and chastened by sickness and misfortunes. And he, the young man in his pride, just now an atheist, a scoffer, a despiser of all religion, turned his face to the wall, and with tears in his eyes thanked Heaven for all its mercies.

And the vision of the pure and beautiful rested on his senses. And for him there is yet hope.

François now became very impatient to see his Rosalie.

He found himself very weak, but with the assistance of Tom Connolly, who was quite proud to act in his new capacity of valet to the Captain's friend, he arose.

The toilette was ready for him—in fact everything was luxurious; and there was a marble bath, through which ran a cool, clear stream of water, and fresh-gathered lime leaves were floating on it.

And now let us fancy him dressed in a suit of white linen, clean and fragrant. His face was rather pale, but his black eyes shone clear and brightly, and the expression of his countenance, generally so bold, impetuous, and sarcastic, was now softened down to a gentle melancholy. The loss of blood, and the freshly-revived feelings of his youth, had deprived him of all that was harsh. The spirit of pride, of self-dependence, of conceit, had vanished. His love, chastened by defeat and affliction, had become more pure, more unselfish. He knew that he had been unworthy of such a being as the good and lovely creole. His future life should make amends for his past unworthiness. He would live for her alone; and now that his compact with Victor Hugues was at an end, he might and would remain as a prisoner on parole at Dominica, and watch over her safety.

It was therefore with a beating, yet hoping, heart that he allowed the soldier to usher him into the presence of his beloved.

Rosalie and Marguerite were seated together with their arms twined round each other's waist.

Linked together by ties such as few women, aliens in blood, can ever know, affection, grief, and suffering had made them more than sisters.

When François entered, Marguerite rose, and left the room by another door. It was rather dark, and he did not see her; but he was at once conscious of the presence of his Rosalie. She too arose, pale, trembling, and with her eyes cast timidly down, went to meet him; but her agitation was so great that she could scarcely stand, and when he caught her in his arms her head sank upon his bosom, and she burst into tears.

"What has happened, my own—my thrice-loved Rosalie?" said François, tenderly, yet somewhat surprised and alarmed at this mournful reception. "What is it? — tell me, dearest."

"O, François!" she faintly murmured.

“Speak, love!—I am listening.”

“No—no. I cannot—I cannot. It drives me mad!”

“Rosalie, if you love me, speak! This suspense is dreadful!”

There was a pause.

“The negroes—the mulatto—the wood!” she gasped, and at each word she shuddered, and the shudder vibrated through his frame. “François, it was a hideous dream!”

Her lover looked at her piteously—beseechingly, wishing, yet fearing to hear more.

But she could not—she dare not raise her face. To encounter his gaze now would have been death. She did not see the anxious, piercing, yet mournful look her words—her manner, had kindled in his eyes. His pale face had become in a moment frightfully haggard. The Carib’s warning at La Maison Vide had flashed before him. The words now rang in his ears. Beware the mulatto, Lemantin! The negroes! the mulatto! O, God! surely the

mulatto, Lemantin!—Oh, horrible suspicion! Oh, hideous phantasy! And thus to meet! Thus to have the cup dashed from his lips! Thus to find his treasure turned to withered leaves!

Again a pause. Oh! in a few moments what tortures may wring the human heart! In the minutest atom of time, that which eternity can alone alleviate.

And could Rosalie, in that brief pause, read his thoughts? Was there a chord vibrating in her heart from his?

Between two who truly love, are there not mysterious sympathies? Is there not a consciousness of the presence, though they cannot see? Is there not an interchange of thoughts, though both be silent? Answer, ye who love. She did not raise her face from his bosom, but murmured, sobbing :

“François, my beloved, we have lost a father!”

These words, few and sad as they were, re-

assured him. Man's love is selfish, make the best of it that we can. So that when Rosalie accounted for her bitter grief by her father's death, François felt as if a heavy load had been removed from his heart. He kissed her pale forehead, and said, tenderly, and soothingly :

“Do not grieve so, my own, sweet Rosalie ! If you have lost a father, you have found one who loves you as dearly.”

“Stay !” said Rosalie, quickly, looking up for the first time, and gently disengaging herself from him. “True, I am an orphan, friendless, and cast upon the world. I love you, and you know it ; but I cannot, I will not, listen to you until—until—” She hesitated, and burst into tears.

“I understand what you would say, dearest Rosalie. But, believe me, I am changed. I have seen the frightful fallacy of our faith. Oceans of blood poured forth at the shrine of Liberty will never propitiate her. Freedom—true and genuine freedom—must be

the work of time, of self-restraint, of virtue—not of the guillotine. O, Rosalie! I am awakened; I see that we have been bowing down to stocks and stones, and, like the idolators of old, shedding man's blood ruthlessly, to get what they cannot give us. Let what has passed be but as a fearful dream, at which we shudder, but know that it is no more. My compact with Victor Hugues is at an end, now and for ever; and I claim the fulfilment of your promise. Do you remember it, sweet one?"

"It is wrong, and very cruel of you, François, to remind me of it now. You do not, you cannot, know what I have suffered, or you would not be so cruel."

"Well, then, I will not, Rosalie; I will wait for better times. But come, dearest, let us sit down quietly. Dry those tears: do not grieve so much for what has passed, but let the future open to us, and tell me your sad tale. It will do you good, and it will enable me to act better in every way, as becomes the betrothed of one so precious."

"I cannot, François, I cannot tell you anything. There has been a cloud over my senses. Oh! what a coward I have been, how unlike my sweet sister Marguerite. She knows all, she can tell you."

"What!" said François, "is Marguerite here too—the pearl of pearls?"

"Have you not seen her?"

"How could I?"

"She was in the room when you came in."

"I saw but you, my beloved; I had no eyes for any one else."

"Hush! hush!"

"Love is blind," said François, gaily, "which means to every one but one, and that is why I could not see Marguerite."

"I know you will be glad to see her—she is my sister now, dear François. I will go and fetch her."

"Wait a moment, Rosalie: I am in a puzzle. Whose house am I in?"

"It belongs to Marguerite's uncle; but I fear, alas, that he too is dead."

“Were you frightened, Rosalie, when you heard that I was wounded?”

Rosalie raised her eyes, they met his, a look of intense love was beaming in both.

“I am satisfied,” said François, clasping her to his heart, “and I will ask you no more foolish questions, dearest. When the cloud has passed away, we will talk of love. Much has to be done, and I should like to see dear Marguerite.”

“Let me go then, and I will bring her here.”

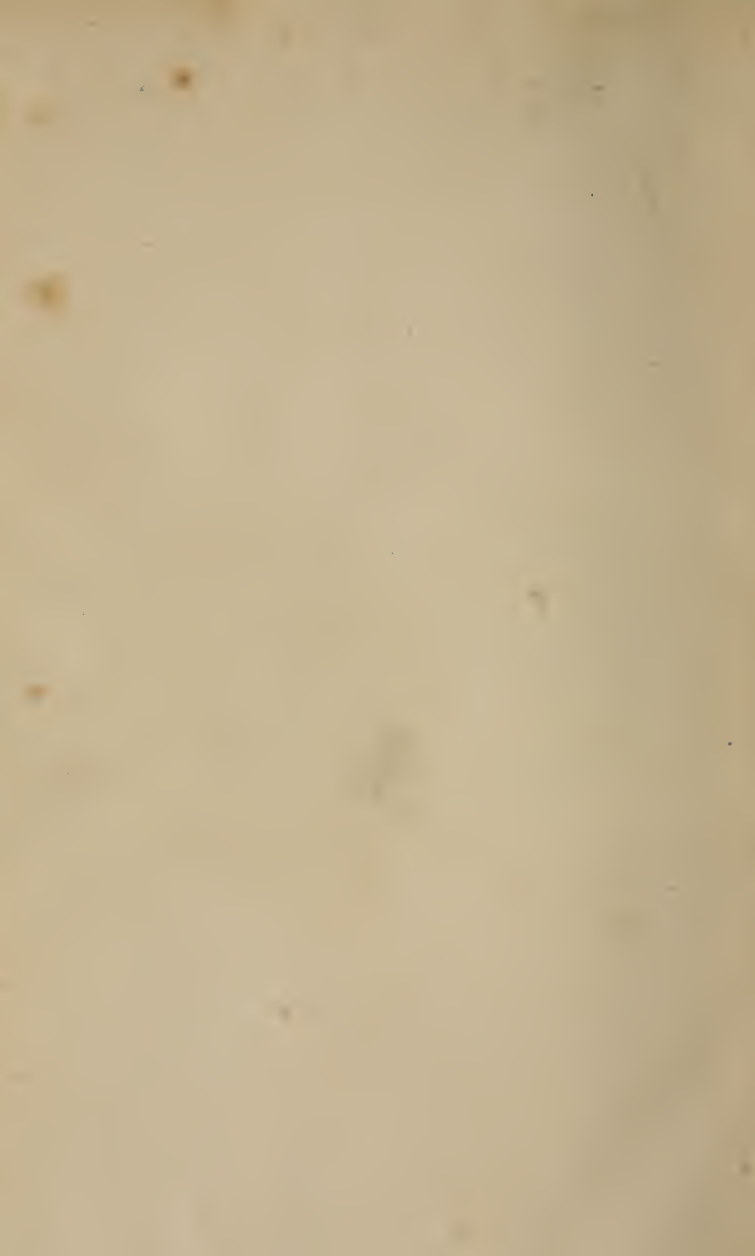
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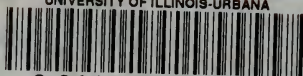








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